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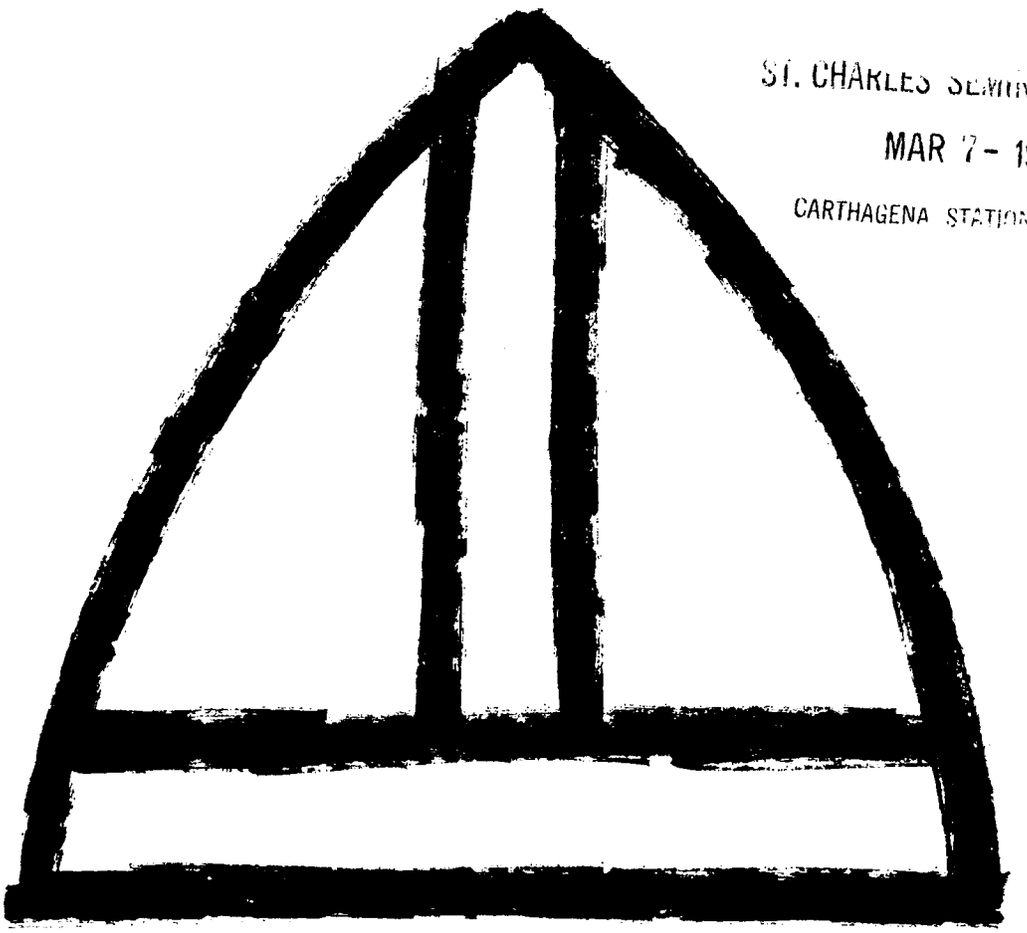

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CORRESPONDENCE

Different Goals

Syracuse, N.Y.

To the Editors: I enjoyed Mr. Cox's article on Reston, Virginia (January 20). It is unfortunate that in his analysis he has confused two distinctly different social goals; namely, income redistribution and poverty eradication.

With the exception of the atypical circumstances of World War II we have not made any progress in redistributing the nation's national income in at least the last thirty years.

Fortunately we have done somewhat better in reducing the proportion of the population below some (take your pick) poverty line. It appears that our limited success is due largely to general economic growth.

It seems to me that if we are to attack these problems, or even talk about them, we must first make careful distinctions concerning their fundamental differences.

JOHN P. WHITE
Assistant Professor of Economics
Le Moyne College

Starvation Politics

Kiel, Germany

To the Editors: The editorial entitled "Starvation Politics" in the January 6 issue seemed to imply that America was denying its moral obligations by withholding grain from starvation-faced India. I believe that responsible U.S. action may require just this stern measure. No one wants Indians to starve. But this is not the question. The question is whether America should continue to send the grain which alleviates famine temporarily, but also allows India to avoid giving agriculture the top development priority. The main objective of a long-run responsible U.S. food policy must be to force India to shift development resources from other sectors to agriculture. Famine may be the only incentive sufficiently radical to compel India to give agriculture the necessary priority.

The argument is not valid that it is the wrong time to pursue such a stern policy because the present political turmoil in India prevents decisive government action. The turmoil is to a large extent caused by the food shortage. It cannot be expected that the political situation will improve before the food situation improves. On the other hand the rapidly growing Indian population provides a decisive reason for the U.S. to act quickly.

A firm U.S. food policy toward neutral India would undoubtedly have unpleasant political consequences. Since America is not the only food-donating country, it is also possible that an unrelenting policy would not affect Indian development priorities. However, since the U.S. is the chief donating country, a severe policy would certainly cause India to reconsider its development program. If the stern policy on food donations were combined with the offer of a substantial increase in U.S. technological assistance to complement India's own increased efforts in agriculture, it is quite possible that a "to hell with your aid" response would be avoided. However India's food problem cannot be solved by increased American aid alone. A lasting commitment by India to concentrate on agricultural development is needed.

The question of U.S. responsibility is not the question of feeding India today or letting it starve. It is the difficult question of whether the U.S. should adopt and maintain the politically unpleasant, and on the surface, morally objectionable decision to let many Indians starve this year in order to avoid the starvation of a great many more Indians in a few years.

RICHARD J. MURNANE

New Approaches

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I loudly applaud "Leslie Dewart's most timely discovery of a new approach to the Christian faith" (in his book *The Future of Belief*, discussed by Michael Novak, February 3). Certainly the disparity between the *weltanschauung* presupposed by traditional theology and that of contemporary man has been noted by others before him but few have been able to locate the source of their uneasiness nor have ventured to present any reasonable alternative to the traditional position.

Although I am sympathetic to Mr. Dewart's general intent ("The integration of Christian belief with the contemporary experience of Christian man"), I find myself wondering whether purging Christianity of hellenistic thought categories is not perhaps too facile a solution to the problems we face in attempting to re-conceptualize our faith. There seems to be a growing tendency to make Scholasticism an all too convenient whipping boy for the difficulties that beset Christianity. While it was undoubtedly wrong to canonize Scholasticism, it would seem equally wrong to completely exorcise ourselves of it. Nor would such an exorcism be as easy to accomplish as Mr. Dewart seems to indicate. Although he manifests a knowledge of and a respect for Scholasticism in the context of its age (a knowledge and respect not echoed by Gabriel Vahanian), Mr. Dewart breaks with it so radically that we may wonder whether he recognizes any continuity of thought at all between medieval and contemporary man.

The difficulties of starting with a clean slate become evident when Mr. Dewart attempts to free us of the "hellenistic" notions of God's omnipotence, eternity, infinity and even existence. I have particular difficulty with Dewart's proposal to replace the "concept of being" with the "concept of reality." In the first place, haven't most Thomists (particularly the Maréchalians) always disclaimed any ability of man to form a *concept* of being and insisted that the best we can do is to attain an *awareness* or *experience* of being (although, as Daniel Callahan pointed out in "Religious Slum Dwellers" [Aug. 19], most of us can't even do that)? Furthermore, although I fully agree that "to *exist* and to be *present* are quite different things," I think it a *non sequitur* to maintain that "therefore the affirmation that God does not exist at all takes nothing away from God's reality and presence." Does not presence *presuppose* existence? I agree that a person can exist without his being present to me (even while he is sitting

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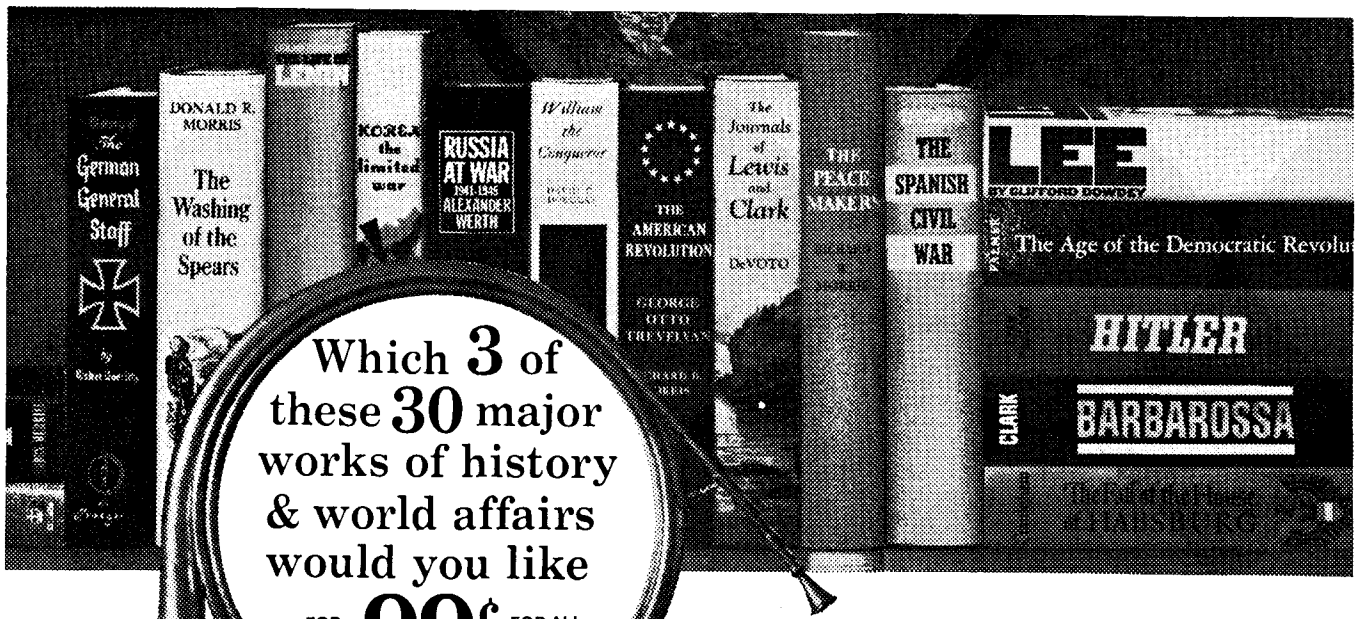

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next to me), but I fail to see how he can be present without existing.

BRO. QUENTIN STONE, O.F.M.

Cow Slaughter

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Dom Bede Griffiths' article on the Sacred Cow (February 3) quite broke me up.

How rational, how clever, how smug! "Reverence for the cow and for nature herself, as something not simply to be exploited for the convenience of man, but as something sacred, with which man has to cooperate in order to fulfill God's plan in creation is surely a good thing. I would say that cow-slaughter is in no way opposed to this kind of reverence. . . ."

Would you say so, really? And what do you say when non-Catholics speak of contraception as "in no way opposed to this kind of reverence"? Even when "it is presented as something which not only has economic value but which can take its place in the service of God and man and in harmony with the purposes of Nature." I am sure Father Griffiths protests bitterly. . . . CATHERINE PARENS

Collusive Clarity

Princeton, N.J.

To the Editors: Without entering Mr. Novak's dispute with Mr. Dewart ("Belief and Mr. Dewart," Feb. 3), whose book I've not read, I would like to question the concept of "relevance" proposed by Mr. Novak as a guideline for future Catholic philosophizing. From my standpoint, which derives in part from the more humanistic and existentially oriented of contemporary psychological analysts, such as Laing, Winnicott and Guntrip in Europe and Maslow, Marcuse and Norman Brown here, such "relevance" is a suspect, not to say naive term.

One could almost say that it is irrelevance that is today's prime measure of sanity and freedom. A free-flowing, rather cozying "dialogue" among philosophers and theologians is not the best alternative to personal mystification and "nonsense" speech. As Laing has recently declared to a New York gathering of psychiatrists and therapists, what we need to say—to ourselves and to others—is that we do not know, that our very clarity is collusive. It is not that Heideggerian obfuscations are to be always viewed as Socratic ignorance (indeed, Heidegger seems to me to be conning us at a rather deeper level of "clarity"), but that—in Mr. Novak's unhappy phrase—"what rings true to American experience" is exactly the criterion that, under relentlessly institutionalized forms of dialogue, will lead us to self-alienation and madness. The program of Mr. Novak to align oneself with, and work for, the confluence of American naturalism and the more linguistically conscious practitioners of phenomenology is apt to produce that plethora of "sense" and "clarity" that is the perennial hallmark of rationalism. As Heidegger has said, the characteristic of real thought is "surprise," and this plateau can only be gained by a certain revolution, even a titanic "madness." Is it not in our multi-formed careers of "dialogue" that we most often encounter the real "madness" of redundancy and irrelevance, and irrelevance built on the habitual pretense of forgetting and concealing ourselves? Perhaps it is power instead of play, the future in the place of the present, clarity rather than muddledness, and relevance instead of silence, that we have made the underpinnings of a lie that has become so deafening that we have forgotten we ever began to tell it. DAN SULLIVAN

"God"

Mount St. Joseph, Ohio

To the Editors: Sometimes I think that it is some of the contemporary writers who are trying to pin God down, to encompass Him to their own psychological satisfaction rather than the traditional theologians who, though they have made God an "object" of a scientific theology, have nevertheless offered for contemplative delight, a God Who transcends rationality. The mysteries which demand the "holding of both ends of a chain" do not remove this God from our love and trust.

They hope that new thinking will bring about encounter with a living Jahweh rather than that arid abstract knowledge of a "detached" Divinity. The little theological lecturing and reading that I have had opportunity for in the so-called traditional sources has often caused a pause of wonder and delight in God, a "going out" toward Him. Even someone like Garrigou-Lagrange with his weighty distinctions and affirmations, etc., has produced this effect, but no article in the "God" issue of the *Commonweal* did so.

Are not some of the interpretations "straw men"? For how many is the acceptance of revealed truth a substitute for God revealing? Who said that defining nature as a principle of activity is to determine human action for one? Why does a consideration of the New Testament as a completion of the Old rule out the possibility of meaningful religious experience for today's Israelite (or Protestant or Catholic)? For whom was the God of tradition a hardened result of his own desire to be God? Why does faith in revelation and in the revealed truth contradict that God Himself is the ultimate object of faith? This could go on.

How often have we stopped at some particularly inspiring statement in current books only to find the candor of the author indicating in a footnote that the thought was at least germinal in St. Thomas Aquinas?

Sometimes I think that Whitehead's "Process" and Sartre's "Free choice of essence" and other recent philosophical concepts may be too influential in our thinking. Being "avant-garde" is good when it is not an ultimate end and for its own sake. SISTER JULIA MARIE, S.C.

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: Congratulations on your Commonweal Papers, No. I ("God," Feb. 10). I especially appreciated Gabriel Moran's excellent article on the God of Revelation. I would, however, like to raise some questions with Father John Dunne's article "The Human God: Jesus," notwithstanding my admiration for his attempt to tackle the most difficult question of the psychological-spiritual biography of Jesus. This is a task which modern biblical scholars have generally abandoned as having no basis in the sources. Perhaps our real job is to

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find a viable distinction yet relationship between the "Jesus of history" and the "Christ of faith."

Father Dunne tries hard to say something about the historical Jesus that can be validly drawn from a modern view of the sources. Yet he still seems to be trying to save a Jesus for faith that will be inoffensive to our present cultural consciousness. Consequently, although he allows the disciples of Jesus to be good apocalyptic Jews, he refuses to let Jesus himself be one, but presents us with some notions about "unconditional acceptance" which we are supposed to accept as Jesus' "self-consciousness." Such notions make good contemporary Protestant theology, but why not accept the fact that they are a translation? Why try to superimpose them on a Jesus of history? I would suggest that an existentialist Jesus is just as foreign to a 1st century Jew as the 19th century Jesus of bourgeois respectability which Schweitzer so admirably exposed.

Assuming that we really want to say something about Jesus as historians, then we must finally allow him to be what he was historically, namely a first century sectarian apocalyptic Jew. This means that he was caught up with visions of a coming Judgment and glorious descent of the Son of Man on clouds of glory, an event which he expected to happen imminently. We have to de-mythologize this, but let's not pretend that he did so.

Father Dunne admits that this was the disciples' view of Jesus, and yet he completely ignores any relation of this primitive apostolic view of Jesus to Jesus' own view of himself and the world situation. The disciples' interpretation of Jesus as "He who would return as Son of Man" appears sprung from nothing in relation to a Master who was himself occupied with some existentialist concepts of his "baptismal experience."

Surely this hiatus between Master and disciples makes strange history. If his disciples believed that Jesus was to return in glory as the Angelic Envoy, it was because the Master's preaching was itself occupied with these themes. (That is to say, Jesus was preaching an imminent Kingdom, although he may or may not

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MORE NON-ESCALATION

The shelling of North Vietnam's coast and the mining of its rivers, we are told by the Administration, do not constitute escalation of the war. Then what would? On each step of the up-escalator stands a public relations man smoothly explaining that no ascent has taken place. In fact, the two recent escalations are clear enough. The shelling of the coast may be "supplemental" to air strikes, but it adds an entirely new form of attack, and one not susceptible to claims of "pinpoint bombing" that avoids civilians and damages only military targets. Since the shelling comes from ships at least five miles from the mainland, a decision has been made to run the risk of heavy civilian casualties. This time there will be no vice-presidential speeches joyously extolling the precision of U.S. attacks on the North.

The mining of rivers is also ominous. Like non-lethal gas, it is not as deplorable in itself as what it points to: mining (of harbors) has long been demanded by the most red-blooded of the hawks. In public opinion, at least, it will now be only a short jump to the dangerous step of dropping mines in deep water around the few major ports in the North. Who will be able to raise a fuss, if "supplemental" mining is decided upon as the next venture in non-escalation?

What has been true of most U.S. attempts to escalate is true here: there is little point to it militarily. After nearly two years of over-blown claims about air strikes on the North, we get Secretary McNamara's admission that he doesn't believe "the bombing up to the present has significantly reduced, nor any bombing that I would contemplate in the future would significantly reduce, the actual flow of men and *matériel* to the South." The loss of hundreds of planes over the North has been an expensive and unsuccessful venture in psychological, not military warfare: punishment and pressure on the North, reassurance for the regime in the South. The current steps faithfully follow the missteps of the past. There will be heavy civilian casualties, little or no impact on the military situation, and a deterioration of peace efforts.

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What is the point? Apparently that the Administration feels it must nurse Premier Ky through the current peace scare. Also, perhaps, that the Administration feels more military pressure at this point will surely bring Ho Chi Minh to the bargaining table. The fact that this policy has proved unrelievedly wrong-headed for two years is apparently no deterrent. Or perhaps the Administration, against all its stated aims, is now developing a taste for total military victory in Vietnam. The point is that we do not know.

Walter Lippmann has written in *Newsweek* of "The Temptation of Lyndon Johnson": "Shall we seek a settlement on the objectives we proclaimed in the beginning? Or, smelling victory, shall we force the enemy to surrender and accept a dictated peace?" In each of the three previous major wars of this century, Lippmann writes, the United States has reached this crucial point of decision and failed the crucial test. Will we again be swept beyond our stated aims? The chaos in China may well be tempting the President to try for total victory. It would be a tragic mistake, yet the signs are that the Administration may be prepared to make it. As Lippmann writes, ". . . there are strong reasons for thinking that once again the extremists, who think there is no substitute for victory, are in the saddle."

BERNARD B. FALL

Bernard B. Fall chose to be an "independent scholar." He defined that vocation in his Introduction to *Viet-Nam Witness*: the independent scholar must be "capable of recording the facts in a given situation as they actually are; and, unburdened by considerations of policy or feudal allegiance to the views of a particular bureaucracy or service, he can make certain predictions of future developments."

The formula is dry-as-dust; the reality was something else. In his effort to accomplish the task he set himself, Fall died, blown up by a landmine, in that area of Vietnam he had described in *Street Without Joy*. Fall did not fit the stereotypes of either "hawk" or "dove." He recognized war as a fact of our age; for four years he was a member of the French underground. But as an observer of the French and American campaigns in Southeast Asia, he knew the folly of some wars. His writings showed no contempt for soldiers, except perhaps for stupid leaders. He reported bravery where he found it—on both sides of the conflict. He wrote for *Ramparts,* for *Pacific Affairs,* for the *Marine Corps Gazette.*

In short, Fall's faith was in the truth. He dedicated himself to finding it out, and telling it wherever he could. He was convinced that Vietnam was a great graveyard of theories based on illusions and that, save for these illusions, it could have been the great graveyard of far fewer men.

The record bears out his conviction. Needless to say, he was not always correct in his conclusions. But if those conclusions, personally and painfully reached, were set side by side, year after year, with the official conclusions reached by all the information-gathering apparatus of the U.S. government (beginning with John Foster Dulles' contention, one month *after* Dienbienphu, that the French would "break the back" of the Viet Minh in 1955), the case for the "independent scholar" would be devastating.

It was this unrelenting search for the truth, his refusal to tailor the facts to the requirements of some palatable "solution," that gave Fall's writings their undertone of pathos and tragedy. "The temptation is great," he warned, "for the concerned observer to throw in his lot with those who have always viewed Vietnam in the simple terms of power politics, grand strategy, or Chinese aggressiveness; or, on the other side of the ideological fence, in such equally simple terms as the American 'lust for power.' But both those high roads of error may well find a major war, if not a world war, at their end. That is why it is more important than ever not to succumb to the temptation of the easy way out, no matter how difficult the trail of the truth and how heavy the burden of the record."

Today, much scholarship appears irrelevant. Real competence seems to be attained only at the price of sterile specialization. Officialdom, most recently the CIA, displays tremendous powers of co-option and propaganda. Fall's work was a model of opposition to all these trends. Indeed, what he wrote about one of his books might describe the essence of his vocation: it was "less a plea and an example for the right to dissent—for dissent, too, has its 'organization men'—than for the right to *think independently.*"

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Germany and the Bomb— A New Versailles?

A re-examination of the German position regarding the non-proliferation treaty dominates political debate here at present. Daily newspapers, radio and television, as well as the policy-making bodies of the political parties are preoccupied with this question. Some have referred to it as a frantic discussion, but it could just as well be called educational and illuminating for members of parliament and citizens. This vast treatment of an issue is in itself something rare in current-day Germany. People are becoming aware of the implications that a hasty signature under international pressure may have for Germany.

Criticism reached such a point that Kiesinger and Brandt were recently forced into making public statements

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on Germany's position. Doubts about the non-proliferation treaty have been raised from many quarters. *Die Bild Zeitung,* Germany's largest circulating tabloid headlined "We don't want to become a nation of beggars." Ex-Chancellor Adenauer, visiting in Madrid, was widely heard disclaiming the treaty as a "devilish" new addition to the Morgenthau plan and the occasion of a second Yalta.

More significant, however, are the strong positions expressed by respected scientists and statesmen. Analyzing the non-proliferation treaty, Dr. Wilhelm Grewe pointed out the decided drawbacks for non-nuclear nations both in research into the peaceful uses of atomic energy and into the question of sharing the industrial reaping of "spin-off" from research for military use. It is claimed that peaceful and military research in atomic energy are difficult to separate.

Grewe's analysis goes further, indicating political disadvantages on the international scene for non-nuclear nations. In recent years Britain, France and China all went ahead with their atomic research in the race to keep up at least as secondary powers with the United States and the Soviet Union. According to this theory it follows that those countries with nuclear weapons will not only be world powers on the military and industrial level, but that they will also monopolize technical scientific know-how. As Foreign Minister Brandt stated in a recent interview on this question, Germany no longer desires to nor can be a military power, but its present strength to contribute and share in the competitive world of science and industry cannot be denied it.

It is also argued here that the treaty must not exclude the possibility of European unity in the future, and along with this the right for Europe to defend itself with its own atomic defense system. Some circles claim that Strauss, one of the strongest proponents of European unity and defense, would resign from the cabinet if this possibility is not safeguarded in the treaty. It is doubtful whether this step would be necessary, but the effects of even this kind of rumor within the country can well be imagined.

As strong as the above-mentioned issues themselves is the fear within the major political parties that if they remain passive, a possible rise and increased attraction of the National Democratic Party may take place. The question of the non-proliferation treaty would be the first real issue for this so far issueless party.

Political silence within Germany was certainly impossible after Kosygin's statement in London that the Federal Republic would have to sign the treaty whether it wants to or not. Without meaningful alternatives in the form of clauses in the treaty, a radicalization of the German people might be expected.

In any case Germany finds itself confronted with the dilemma of not wanting to appear a foe of disarmament, and yet still wanting to be farsighted enough not to suffer the real political and economic disadvantages of a non-nuclear industrialized nation in the near future. There is good reason to believe that Germany is not the only country that feels this way. One need only note the statements issued recently by Japan and, earlier, Italy. Maybe the reaction of the Latin American countries is even more comparable here in their reaction to the dominant role played by the United States in relationship to a non-proliferation treaty in Latin America. Soviet pressure is especially distasteful to Germans. Among responsible leaders there seems to be a latent fear of a rising aversion among the German people to any treaty "dictated" à la Versailles, an aversion which could have serious ramifications in this country once again.

CZARINA WILPERT

(Czarina Wilpert, now living in West Germany, is a former staff member for both U.S. and international Young Christian Students.)

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OVER-ACTING?

RONALD REAGAN, GOVERNOR

In his inaugural address, Governor Ronald Reagan capsulized his philosophy:

"For many years now, you and I have been shushed like children and told there are no simple answers to the complex problems which are beyond our comprehension. Well, the truth is, there are simple answers—there just are not easy ones . . . The time has come for us to decide whether collectively we can afford anything we think of simply because we think of it. The time has come to run a check to see if all the services government provides were in answer to demands or were just goodies dreamed up for our supposed betterment."

Nothing, however, which Reagan did in his first month in office underscored this philosophy more dramatically

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than the firing by the Board of Regents of Dr. Clark Kerr as president of the University of California. Despite his heated denials, the firing was the governor's major political act of his first 30 days in office.

Throughout his campaign Reagan repeatedly made UC, particularly the Berkeley campus, an issue. He promised that he would ask former CIA chief John A. McCone to investigate the university for Communism, "sexual misbehavior," and "unconstitutional political interference." He assured the voters, however, that he would not cut spending for education.

Almost immediately after taking office Reagan made the university a primary target of his "iron hand" budget, asking the Democratic-controlled legislature to cut back the system's 1967-68 operating budget by 10 percent. He also asked for a resident tuition charge. Shortly after the firing of Kerr the McCone probe was "postponed indefinitely" because "it would be unfair to ask a new president to take office in the midst of such an inquiry."

In an effort to get "the creative society" moving in California the state's new governor has adopted the motto in budgetary matters "squeeze, cut and trim." Reagan charges the previous Democratic administration with "gimmick" financing and claims that he has "inherited" a financial situation which could amount to "three-quarters of a billion dollars" deficit in the coming year.

He has asked, therefore, for an average 10 percent cut in operating costs of all departments of state government, a freeze on the hiring of new employees, stringent restrictions on out-of-State travel by State employees, and the closing of eight State-operated multiservice health and welfare centers—leaving only five centers still functioning in the state.

In a weekly television "Report to the People" Reagan claimed the Brown administration had "looted and drained" the state's financial resources. The remark drew immediate angry reaction from an otherwise dormant and badly beaten Democratic party leadership. The governor later said he was sorry for using the word "looted."

"I am addicted to a belief that wherever possible when you're speaking publicly, you should use the simplest words. I used that word completely in my own mind in the context that the monies had been spent . . . and the fact that the money was non-existent, that we were going into the hole, had been concealed from the people."

Beside the "iron hand" budget Reagan has suggested that taxes be raised in "sectors not now subject to these levies" in addition to boosting "luxury taxes" in an effort to meet California's $4.6 billion budget.

Reagan has cautioned, however, against increasing taxes on business and industry which would "penalize business, hamper the ability of private industry to create jobs" and create "obstacles to the attraction of new industry."

A resolution meanwhile has been introduced by the Democratic Speaker of the State Assembly, Jesse Unruh, calling for the Legislative analyst and the Legislative auditor to examine the administration's charge that California faces an "unprecedented fiscal crisis."

In the meantime the State Senate in an economy move abolished all their interim committees except one, the notorious Senate Committee on Un-American Activities. It was this committee's report on the UC Berkeley campus which served as the basis for Reagan's campaign charges of Communism and sexual misbehavior, although he later admitted that he had not read the report.

Although the firing of Clark Kerr and the state's fiscal problems have monopolized the headlines, the governor's appointments to high administrative posts have also caused a great deal of alarm in the state. Some of the appointments include:

Edwin Meese, Deputy District Attorney of Alameda County, an outspoken advocate of capital punishment, is Reagan's new clemency secretary. The state, which has had no executions in the last four years, presently has 59 men awaiting the gas chamber on San Quentin's Death Row.

Earl Coke, former Bank of America vice president in charge of agricultural loans, is the new State Director of Agriculture. Allan Grant, four-term president of the powerful California Farm Bureau and a member of the National Right to Work Committee, has been named as president of the State Board of Agriculture, which also includes an automatic position on the UC Board of Regents. William H. Tolbert, an official of a Ventura county citrus growers organization and a former administrator in various farm labor procurement programs is Reagan's new deputy director of employment.

In a state where farm income will pass the $4 billion mark in 1967 and "agri-business" now accounts for over $15 billion, these three latter appointments are extremely important.

It was Grant who originally brought the motion to fire Kerr, a long-time critic of certain state agricultural programs, before the Regents. Although his motion was tabled, he later boasted to a civic luncheon that Kerr's dismissal "shows the power in this state of the Farm Bureau." Coke, in his first press conference, stated clearly that Mexican *braceros* will again be needed in California to harvest the crops.

Reagan, meanwhile, in his agriculture message has called for among other things an "agricultural youth corps," and the transfer of jurisdiction concerning farm labor matters from the State Mediation and Conciliation Service to the Department of Agriculture. Cesar Chavez, leader of the organized farm laborers, has described the latter proposal as "letting the fox guard the chickens."

Two other appointments which have caused concern in California are lumberman Norman Livermore, Jr. as head of the State Natural Resources Commission and Burton E. Smith, ex-president of the California Real

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Estate Commission and supporter of the unconstitutional 1964 repeal of the Rumford Fair Housing Act, as State Real Estate Commissioner. Bills have been introduced in both houses, with Reagan's support, to repeal the Rumford Act.

"If this continues," said Assemblyman Charles Warren, Democratic State Chairman, of Reagan's first four weeks, "history may record it as the period when California took a great leap backward."

Warren noted the recent memo distributed by Reagan's press secretary, Lyn Nofziger, ordering all department heads to clear publicity releases through his office because "today's policy may not be yesterday's policy."

Many Californians hail the Reagan administration as a stirring example of the type of government all America could choose to have either in 1968 or 1972. Others, however, have expressed sentiments similar to those on a picket sign at a recent university student-faculty protest rally on the State Capitol steps: "In California Progress Was Our Most Important Product." A. V. KREBS, JR.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

The incorrigibly divided Vietnam described in this space last week might be understood as the "old" Vietnam resisting that national unification which has been the objective of both Communist and Western policy since 1954. The sects, the secret societies, the religious factions and regional interests and ethnic communities, stand as obstacles to any national government. Potentially, they are obstacles to any Communist unification of the country; and if the Communists were to come to power in Saigon they would almost certainly move to destroy these groups. Ngo Dinh Diem did exactly this in 1955. He understood that there could be no strong central government so long as the sects (including the Binh-Xuyen, the secret society which controlled Saigon's police and organized vice) had autonomous power. In the first months of his rule he crushed or scattered them—bribing some leaders, killing others, playing factions against one another, and attacking and destroying their "armies."

But in the end Diem was destroyed by precisely the forces he thought he had conquered. Remnants of the sects collaborated with the nascent Viet Cong in establishing military resistance to the Diem government. The Viet Cong at the same time began a campaign of assassination of Diemist leaders in the villages—cutting Saigon off and depriving the government of the means of governing. The old parties conspired within the army to preserve themselves and dominate whatever survived Diem. The activist wing of the Buddhists, restless under a government which increasingly was a sectarian and northerners' government, began the campaign of popular resistance and fiery immolations that was to destroy Diem's international standing and American sponsorship. In the end it was the "old" Vietnam which collaborated with the newest of revolutionary movements to ruin Diem.

Could a better government than Diem's have succeeded where he failed? This is the theory of the liberal alternative to Communism. It is today the policy rationale of the American intervention in Vietnam as it was our rationale in the early Diem period. The American officials now at work in Saigon have mostly retreated from the higher levels of political abstraction and ambition to the practical problems of a painful and discouraging war. But if they are pressed to declare their belief in how Communism could be defeated, their answer is that a government should be established which is more attractive to the people of Vietnam than Communism. It would be more attractive if it were democratic, consulting the popular will, providing economic and social reforms, and eliminating corruption and inefficiency in the civil and military administration.

This list of attributes usually is given in reverse order by American officials because corruption and socio-economic disorder cause them their most pressing problems. But, talking with Americans in Saigon, one also gains the impression that they regard corruption as at least open to practical remedies. The bigger reforms seem the stuff of dreams. Nevertheless, even the most disillusioned Americans—the ones who have learned to expect the least of Vietnam—still will insist that their ultimate objective is a liberal and democratic Vietnam.

Here, I think, we are at the crucial point of discrepancy between the American and Vietnamese national experiences. Here the American nearly always falters in attempting to imagine the scale of the proposed achievement. Our objective in South Vietnam is not to reform a bad or unrepresentative or archaic government. It is our ambition to create a unified political society where—except for the briefest periods—none has existed before. (And when it has existed, one contending faction has simply dominated all the others.) Even under the French, Vietnamese unity was a brief accomplishment. The French only consolidated their control of the country at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Vietnamese people moved south of the seventeenth parallel into what now is South Vietnam in the tenth century, absorbing the area around Hué. They did not conquer the central part of the country—most of modern South Vietnam—until the sixteenth century. They

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took the area around Saigon in the seventeenth century and the Mekong Delta and Camau Peninsula in the last half of the eighteenth century. The old government in Tonkin could not exercise authority at such a distance and there was from the early years of the migration a political fractionalization, local lords defying the dynasty in the north—which itself was overthrown by usurpers in 1527. There was civil war along roughly the seventeenth parallel from the mid-sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries. There was a rebellion which succeeded against both northern and southern forces in the late eighteenth century but the victors established a unified rule that lasted only three years, degenerating again into three-sided civil struggle. The next unification came only at the beginning of the nineteenth century when French adventurers supported Vietnam's conquest by what was to become the modern royal house of Vietnam—now represented by the deposed and exiled Emperor Bao Dai and his son, Prince Bao Long (who served as a French paratroop officer against the FLN in Algeria).

Not only has unified political authority been ephemeral, but South Vietnam suffered the greater part of the social and cultural impact of the colonial period, the greatest breakdown of indigenous social authority. It was of Cochin China—the southernmost region which includes Saigon—that a French governor wrote in 1885, "we have destroyed the past and nothing has taken its place. We are on the eve of a social revolution which began during the conquest."

The liberal alternative is intelligible only as an abstraction in this distressed and splintered society. If South Vietnam is to have modern centralized government one obviously would struggle that it be democratic rather than Communist. But out of what materials will democracy be made? From the disturbed, totalitarian fragments which make up "old" Vietnam? From the narrow urban elite which represents—on our side—the "new"? When the Diem government put forward its doctrine of "Personalism" and created a shadow-administration of indoctrinated "personalist" cadres throughout the country it was responding to the lack of a unifying national ideology to rival the populist and xenophobic Communism which had defeated the French. But this was an artificial construct—an authoritarian and ultimately sectarian attempt to invent a new loyalty to supplant the established parochial loyalties. Yet there are Americans who today still believe that the answer to Communism is the "creation" of an "ideology of democracy" to fight Communism. But what in fact is such an ideology? And what relevance does it have to the experience of Vietnam's people?

The dilemma is that Vietnam's resources of popular resistance to Communism are parochial and undemocratic. They are those established, inward-looking groups which ideologically exclude Communism and make survival their political objective: the major Catholic and Buddhist groups, the two syncretist sects, and with lesser importance, the remnants of the old nationalist associations. They include the ethnic minorities which are unideological but resist domination by any Vietnamese majority. They include the small urban middle class and liberal intelligentsia. Together these make up between a third and a half of the South Vietnamese population (the number of politically committed Buddhists is problematical). And most of them are—in the language of Marxism—"peoples of the past."

The military regime in Saigon today does not govern these people in any serious way; the regime is an agency dealing with the Americans who prevent a Viet Cong victory. The regime administers the army—but the army is not an instrument of state but the structure of the state itself, supplying the civil as well as the military administration of the provinces. And the army's own inner struggles reflect in a focused and intensified version the struggle taking place among the non-Communist elements in South Vietnam. Premier Ky's strength is that he is not strong—he is provisionally tolerable to the factions in the army; but there hardly is a faction which would not bring Ky down if it believed that it could then suppress its other rivals and exercise total control.

The American policy of pursuing the liberal alternative in Vietnam has deliberately worked to polarize the country's politics, suppressing the power of the nation's autonomous groups in order to centralize power in Saigon—where there is nobody to exercise it. There cannot be so long as the government is a contrivance of the military high command. There still will be no one even if—as the United States hopes will come about this year—a civilian government is established. Almost inevitably this will be a weak government cut off from the mass of the country. The real consequence of this polarizing process has been to centralize power in the Viet Cong and in the United States Embassy. We Americans and the Communists are the only forces worth taking seriously in Vietnam today.

Is there an alternative to such a policy—and such results? If the American aim is to pursue the war and attempt to achieve a military victory over the Viet Cong the answer probably is no. If we wish to compromise the war and obtain a settlement which prevents Vietnam's total domination by the Communists, it may be that another policy is possible. I will discuss this possibility in the final article in this series.

* * *

Any American writing on Vietnam owes a very great debt to the late Bernard Fall. He tried to make us understand Vietnam. We did not understand well enough, and now he has become one of the victims of our ignorance. R.I.P.

WILLIAM PFAFF

(This is the fourth of five articles based on a recent trip to Thailand and Vietnam.)

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ON SELECTING AMERICAN BISHOPS

Does the present method produce only 'safe' men?

JOHN TRACY ELLIS

". . . . the nearest bishops of the province meet together in the city whose see is vacant. The bishop is elected with the people present; it is necessary that the people assist at the election, for they know most fully the life of each one. The episcopal dignity is thus conferred by the vote of the entire brotherhood and the judgment of the bishops."

Thus did Saint Cyprian describe the procedure followed in most provinces of the Roman Empire in the third century. The selection of bishops in the early centuries was often made either by or with the consent of the faithful, even if the popular choice was lacking in the dramatic circumstances that surrounded the election of Saint Ambrose as Bishop of Milan in 374. Actually, the method has shown the most varied patterns throughout the history of the Church, from the feudal aristocracy's paramount power in many areas of the early medieval world to the extremes of lay control reached in Spain and its colonial possessions.

In the latter, nomination to all bishoprics and ecclesiastical benefices had been given over to the crown between the pontificates of Sixtus IV (1471-1484) and Julius II (1503-1513). Pope Julius' successor, Leo X, likewise agreed in the Concordat of Bologna in August, 1516, to permit King Francis I to nominate to the ninety-three episcopal sees of France, as well as to more than 500 of the most important abbeys and religious houses. Nor was the American Church an exception to the variety that had up to that time marked the selection of bishops. In the short span of forty-four years between the appointment of John Carroll as first bishop (1789) and the Second Provincial Council of Baltimore (1833), no less than seven distinct methods had been employed in the choice of bishops for this country.

Having determined by March, 1788, that the future welfare of the infant Catholic Church in the new American Republic called for the appointment of a bishop, a committee of three priests, acting in the name of all their number, that month addressed a petition for a bishop to Pope Pius VI. In it they asked that, "his appointment and authority may be rendered as free as possible from suspicion and odium to those among whom we live." In pursuance of that end the committee further requested, "that the election of the bishop, at least for the first time, be permitted to the priests, who now duly exercise the religious ministry here and have the care of souls." The request was granted and on November 6, 1789, the priests' choice, Father John Carroll, was appointed Bishop of Baltimore, the candidate whom Rome, "for the first time only and by special grace permitted the said priests to elect and to present to this apostolic See."

A few years later, however, when Carroll sought a coadjutor with the right of succession, the next two men appointed to the American hierarchy, Laurence Graessl who died in 1793 before he could be consecrated, and Leonard Neale (1795), were also the choices of the priests in an election. These actions were in consonance with the spirit of the new-born nation, the majority of whose overwhelmingly Protestant population was highly critical of Catholicism. Moreover, it was a procedure altogether congenial to Bishop Carroll himself. Six months before his appointment, when a writer in the *Gazette of the United States* suggested that this was a Protestant country, Carroll was quick to reply, "I am anxious to guard against the impression intended by such

RT. REV. JOHN TRACY ELLIS *is Visiting Professor of Roman Catholic Studies at Brown University during the current semester.*

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insinuations; not merely for the sake of any one profession, but from an earnest regard to preserve inviolate for ever, in our new empire, the great principle of religious freedom." (June 10, 1789)

But the voice of the priests was not allowed to become a permanent feature of the selection of bishops for the United States; nor, in fact, was even the opinion of the bishops themselves at times asked as, for example, when two Irish-born Dominicans stationed in Rome were appointed in succession to the See of New York without reference to Carroll and his fellow bishops. Naturally the latter resented being ignored, and the complaints from this country had become sufficiently strong by 1820 that the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide* was preparing to yield to the American hierarchy's request for the privilege of nomination to vacant sees.

But just at that point the disclosure of the true character of Angelo Inglesi, an Italian-born priest whose scandalous conduct had so far escaped the attention of Bishop Louis W. DuBourg that the latter had recommended him as his coadjutor in Louisiana, came to light and caused an abrupt halt. With evidence of the Inglesi case before them the cardinals of Propaganda revised the decree and upon its appearance in June, 1822, the American bishops' action was restricted to recommending names in general with no right to nominate canonically or elect for a particular vacancy.

There is neither the space nor the need to trace in detail the four or five additional changes in the methods of selecting bishops during the half century between Rome's approval in 1834 of the decrees of the Second Provincial Council which had worked out a procedure to be followed and the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884), except to remark that the increase of ecclesiastical provinces (a metropolitan see with suffragan dioceses) by 1850 to six necessitated a change over that which had obtained when the Church of the entire country was embraced within the single Province of Baltimore.

The fact that there were six archbishops required a change in the legislation of 1834 since all the metropolitans were to be given the right to pass a judgment on the candidates suggested in other provinces. During this same half century sentiment was gradually building up among some of the clergy for the priests to be given once more a voice in the selection of their bishops. At the First Plenary Council in 1852, and again three years later at the Eighth Provincial Council of Baltimore, the suggestion was made that the consultors of a vacant diocese should be allowed to vote for the bishop, but in neither case was there sufficient support to translate these suggestions into law.

Meanwhile the growing complexity of the problems confronting the bishops of the United States added to the gravity and importance of the latter's selection. For example, as the Church entered the second half of the century the question of nationality became more acute with a corresponding emphasis on the national backgrounds of those recommended for the episcopacy. The fact was highlighted by the arrival during the 1850's of an estimated 985,000 Catholic immigrants from seventeen foreign countries with almost as many different languages, and the following decade brought an additional 740,000 immigrants into the American Church for a total Catholic population of over 4,500,000 by 1870. The immigrants speaking their many strange languages, however, were only a single factor, though admittedly the principal one. The disruption that followed in the wake of the Civil War and the pressing obligation to do something in behalf of 4,000,000 or more Negro slaves emancipated in 1863—all these were added reasons for a closer scrutiny of those who were to lead the Church than had been true during the more relaxed years of the early part of the century.

It was little wonder, then, that a forward looking prelate like Martin J. Spaulding, promoted to the premier See of Baltimore in May, 1864, should have taken the initiative for another plenary council in the hope that through the bishops' joint efforts solutions might be found for their many problems. Archbishop Spaulding's suggestion met with favor at the Holy See, and in transmitting the permission, Cardinal Alessandro Barnabò, Prefect of Propaganda, inquired if the Americans wished to have an apostolic delegate sent to preside at the gathering. Spaulding saw no need for this, for as he told Archbishop John McCloskey of New York, "As to sending a President from Rome, I would regard it as implying distrust of the American Episcopate. . . ." (October 1, 1865).

Others as well were sensitive about matters of this kind, and in the following spring Peter Richard Kendrick, Archbishop of Saint Louis, made clear his resentment of Propaganda's sending a list of requirements for candidates for the episcopacy. "This appears to me," he told Spaulding, "carrying centralization to an excess, and taking from the bishops the exercise of that discretion they ought to be presumed to have. . . ." (May 29, 1866).

Although the Second Plenary Council of October, 1866, treated in more detail the position of the priest advisers to the bishops of diocesan consultors, and although Spaulding who presided over its sessions as apostolic delegate, personally favored giving the consultors the right to vote for bishops, once again the subject did not muster enough support to be enacted into a formal decree. Whether or not it would have served to head off the controversies between bishops and priests that marked the years that followed is doubtful, for the inchoate state of canon law in this country at the time proved a happy hunting grounds for disputes.

As their number and seriousness increased, some priests became convinced that the only remedy lay in having their voice heard in the selection of bishops. Two

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notable examples of this view were William Mahoney who, as a priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, had given trouble to three successive ordinaries, and who in 1883 published anonymously and without an *imprimatur* a book which he called, *The Rights of the Clergy Vindicated; or a Plea for Canon Law in the United States,* a volume that ran to nearly 400 pages and which appeared in an enlarged edition in 1885 with the author's name.

Another was Patrick Corrigan, pastor of Our Lady of Grace Church in Hoboken, New Jersey, whose pamphlet entitled, *Episcopal Nominations: Do the Interests of the Church in the United States Require that the Priests Should have the Power of Nominating Bishops?* was promptly suppressed by his superior, Winand Wigger, Bishop of Newark. But Corrigan was not easily discouraged and on the eve of the Third Plenary Council which opened in November, 1884, he brought out another publication, *What the Catholic Church Most Needs in the United States, or the Voice of the Priests in the Election of Bishops.*

While it would be an exaggeration to say that Mahoney and Corrigan voiced the opinions of all the American priests of their day, it was true that the discussion touched off by their written works gave the subject an air of urgency that it had not previously known. And when the archbishops, or their representatives, met with the cardinals of Propaganda at Rome in November-December, 1883, to plan the agenda for their next plenary council, the Mahoney-Corrigan thesis was probably not unrelated to the more than ordinary amount of time spent on delineating the role of diocesan consultors. Especially was this the case once the Propaganda officials realized that the Americans were not prepared to accept their suggestions for the institution of cathedral chapters of priests with the title of canon for the Church in the United States. Had the American metropolitans assented to the establishment of cathedral chapters here, when a vacancy occurred in a diocese the canons would in all likelihood have been given the privilege of drawing up a *terna* or list of three names who in their judgment were suitable candidates for the vacant sees, a practice that then obtained in a number of countries in continental Europe and that Propaganda had accepted in 1829 for Ireland at the suggestion of the Irish bishops.

In the sequel, few topics preoccupied the bishops more during the council of 1884, as well as during the Roman conferences held the next year for the purpose of gaining the Holy See's approval of the Baltimore legislation, than the extent of the power and authority that should be given to the diocesan consultors. Whether the latter's mere "counsel" or "consent" had to be sought by a bishop in various aspects of diocesan business, however, was not directly germane to the consultors' participation in the selection of bishops. This privilege the council voted to give them, along with the irremovable rectors of certain parishes, and Propaganda approved the decree without serious question.

Following Rome's formal approval of the decrees in September, 1885, therefore, the consultors and irremovable rectors in each instance had the right to draw up a *terna* and to submit the three names in the order of *dignissimus, dignior,* and *dignus* to the metropolitan or senior suffragan bishop of the province. True, the bishops were not held to accept the priests' choices, but they were bound to consider these names, to state their reasons if they rejected them, and to pass them on to Rome when they submitted their own *terna.*

This practice remained a part of the method of selecting bishops for the United States until July, 1916, when a decree of the Consistorial Congregation revoked the priests' right, the preamble to the decree stating that the system as then followed entailed too long a delay. What was probably closer to the real reason was the violation of the oath of secrecy about which Rome had issued a warning as early as March, 1910, the Holy See having been embarrassed in having names under consideration appear in the newspapers before a final decision had been reached.

Nearly a quarter century before, however, a new factor had entered the picture. In January, 1893, Pope Leo XIII created the Apostolic Delegation at Washington, in spite of the fact that only one of the fourteen metropolitans had voted for it when the proposal had been laid before their New York meeting the previous November. For various reasons it was equally unpopular with the suffragan bishops as well, not the least being that the action coincided with a rather alarming expansion of the A.P.A., which seized upon the delegation as a further pretext for opposing the Church in this country as a 'foreign' institution.

Although most of the bishops concealed their displeasure, John Lancaster Spaulding, Bishop of Peoria, did not, and in an article directed against the A.P.A. in the September, 1894 issue of the *North American Review,* he made no effort to disguise the hierarchy's opposition, to which he added, "Those whose knowledge of this country was most accurate and intimate believed that the establishment of a papal delegation here would be bad policy." The bishops' reactions notwithstanding, the delegate remained on and thereafter exercised an increasing influence on the selection of members of the hierarchy, since the curial officials were naturally inclined to lend weight to the opinions of the Pope's per-

"An Apostolic Delegation was set up, though only one of the 14 metropolitans voted for it"

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sonal representatives about the names that were forwarded to the Holy See through his office.

In the nearly three-quarters of a century that have passed since the establishment of the Apostolic Delegation the post has been filled by seven successive Italian churchmen holding the rank of titular archbishop whose tenure has averaged a little over ten years each. Following the priests' loss of a voice in the selection of bishops in 1916, the procedure has remained substantially the same to the present time. Every other year at the beginning of Lent the metropolitan of each ecclesiastical province is expected to request the bishops of his province to submit the names of priests whom they regard as worthy of the episcopacy. After he has gathered these names and added his own, he is required, in turn, to send a list to the suffragan bishops for their study. The regulations stipulate that soon after Easter all the bishops in the province are to assemble, discuss the names, and vote by secret ballot on those that they agree should be forwarded to the Apostolic Delegation. When a vacancy occurs, the regulations call for the delegate to consult with the metropolitan of the province in question, solicit the opinions of a number of men who know each candidate well, and forward three names to the Consistorial Congregation.

Human nature being prone to the same defects in the ecclesiastical domain as it is in the secular world, all the canonical provisions are not carried out in each instance as, for example, was true in the appointment of William O'Connell, Bishop of Portland, in February, 1906, as coadjutor with the right of succession to John J. Williams, Archbishop of Boston. O'Connell's name had appeared on neither the *terna* of the priests nor on that of the bishops of the province. It was rather the favor he enjoyed with Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val, Secretary of State, and Cardinal Francesco Satolli, Prefect of the Congregation of Studies, that insured his appointment by Pope Pius X.

Nor does one need to go back to the beginning of this century for illustrations of how the personal influence of an American churchman with powerful figures in the Roman Curia has brought appointment to important dioceses in the United States. Apart entirely from a particular American's influence at the Holy See, the canonical provisions can on occasion be set aside in other ways as, for example, in the province where a metropolitan who died only a few years ago would only under protest summon meetings of his suffragan bishops to decide on candidates for the episcopacy; or in another province where consultation with the metropolitan was ignored and the latter learned of the appointment of one of his suffragans by reading the newspapers. But these were exceptions and ordinarily the procedure which has been outlined above is followed.

That being true, it is obvious that by reason of the key position of the apostolic delegate, the choice of the three names that are to go on the *terna* lies in the main with him. Given his prerogative to advance and to eliminate names in this fashion, *Newsweek* was not too far off the mark when it described it as the delegate's "major source of power" (October 31, 1966). In fact, in the same article the present delegate was quoted as having said, "Rome generally follows my recommendations, but not always. Mostly, though, we see it the same way."

The entire process of selection of bishops is shrouded in so much secrecy that it is not possible for either the clergy or the laity—and, one suspects, at times even for many of the hierarchy—to determine exactly what the deciding factors were in any given case. It may, indeed, depend on whether the apostolic delegate of the moment is of a conservative or a progressive turn of mind, for it would be quite unreal to anticipate that an ultra-conservative or highly progressive delegate would so far suppress his personal convictions and feelings in this regard as to put forth the names of priests of a notably different mentality to his own. It is scarcely a violation of the proprieties to say that the present occupant of the Apostolic Delegation in Washington, appointed in December, 1958, is of a conservative mind since he has been at no pains to conceal where his sympathies lie. Nor can it be called an altogether unwarranted inference that that fact has been reflected in the considerable number of conservative churchmen advanced to the American episcopacy since 1959.

Another important factor that has on occasion influenced the choice of bishops in the United States has been the attitude of highly placed ecclesiastics toward those of different national backgrounds than their own. The point might be illustrated in the remark of the Irish-born Cardinal John Glennon, late Archbishop of Saint Louis, who in a connection unrelated to the choice of bishops, told Cardinal Gibbons concerning the German American Catholics, "As a people they serve well, if they are not allowed to dominate" (January 27, 1904). No serious student of the American Catholic past will deny the decisive role that nationality has played in these matters, as was true of French-born churchmen for about a half century after the age of Carroll, as it was obvious for well nigh a century in the choice of one of German birth or blood to fill the See of Milwaukee. Similarly, from before the Civil War until after World War II the selection of a man not of Irish birth or extraction to rule over several of the most important dioceses in this country would have been unthinkable.

Indeed, there are those who believe that in certain posts of national significance in the American Church the choice of one not of Irish name or tradition is still unthinkable. In that regard there is ample documentary evidence in a vein similar to the letter from one Irish pastor of the Diocese of Pittsburgh to another at a time when the see was vacant (November 5, 1853), and the clergy's mind was still focused on the new Bishop of

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Philadelphia, John N. Neumann, C.SS.R. The writer remarked, "The Germans are putting their heads together, and are already busily at work to procure a German Bishop for Pittsburgh [*sic*]. So we are to be Germanized and Dutchified from one end of the State to the other." He felt duty bound, therefore, to alert his friend, well known for his view that priests should have a voice in the selection of bishops and the most influential of their group, in the hope that the latter might set on foot some plan "to prevent so great an infliction."

Moreover, a clergyman's educational background has not been a matter of indifference in his selection for the episcopacy. It is well known that a large proportion of the American hierarchy has been drawn from the alumni of the North American College in Rome; in fact, from its opening in December, 1859, to May, 1956, there were 105 bishops of the United States—six of them cardinals—who had been trained in whole or in part at that institution. When, therefore, the new Rector of the Gregorian University, the Canadian sociologist, Herve Carrier, S. J., was interviewed shortly after taking office and was asked, "Do you train the future bishops?", his reply had special relevance for the American Church whose Roman students have taken their classes at the Gregorian since 1932. Father Carrier was quoted as having answered, "We do not train them as bishops but it happens that way, either because of their intrinsic value or because the Holy See has selected its bishops among the alumni of Roman institutions."

"Some say that in certain high Church posts, a non-Irish choice is still unthinkable"

The answer is correct as far as it goes, for no informed person will discount the importance of the *Romanità,* but the quoted reply said nothing of the influence exercised by Roman alumni with important connections to have one of their own number advanced to the episcopal office. Those acquainted with these matters are aware that if a powerful churchman is disposed to play the role of "king maker," he can usually do so. American Catholic history offers a number of illustrations of this kind—to name only two, Archbishop Spaulding of Baltimore and Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago. Nor is it necessary to step out of the present generation to find examples of churchmen with strong Roman influence who have been responsible for creating an axis, so to speak, in the Church of the United States and for naming a dozen or more bishops.

Should the church historian of a particular country seek to account for the choice of that nation's bishops since, let us say, the year 1900, he is painfully conscious of the severe handicaps imposed by the scarcity or inaccessibility of documentary evidence. Common sense and prudence, of course, dictate that some measure of secrecy should be exercised in delicate matters of this kind. But how real the difficulty can be as it relates to the historian's task is illustrated in the Consistorial Congregation's decree of 1916 mentioned above, one of the directives of which pertaining to the provincial meeting of bishops to select names for the episcopacy reads as follows, "The original record shall be kept by the Archbishop in the most secret archives, but shall be destroyed after one year, or if imminent danger of violation of secrecy arises, even earlier."

Allowing for this handicap, nonetheless, a reasonably close acquaintance with the type of men chosen for the American hierarchy in the last generation or two would seem to warrant the view that the methods employed tend to perpetuate the same general types in personality and educational background. Granted that the incidence of choice of bishops from priests with chancery experience and training in canon law has probably at times been exaggerated, it still remains true that their number has been relatively high. And the proportion has probably increased since the opening of the School of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America in 1923. Moreover, as the opportunities and demands for graduate instruction in social work have multiplied the same may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, for the considerable number of priests with professional training and experience in that field who have been chosen as bishops.

Priests who serve in diocesan offices such as that of chancellors and directors of charities, constitute, so to speak, their bishop's cabinet. That the latter should be prompted to advance the names of those with whom he has worked closely, and who have shared the administrative experience which has been so conspicuous a characteristic in those selected for the episcopacy in the United States, is understandable. But it is open to question whether the emphasis placed on administrative ability and experience has not gone to excess and has not indirectly been the cause of priests with extraordinary talents in the parochial ministry being ignored. It is generally recognized as a national characteristic of Americans to seek the "practical" in almost every aspect of life, and in this respect those responsible for selecting candidates for the episcopacy have been no exception.

Viscount Bryce was not the only foreign visitor to the United States who noted the national tendency toward the "practical." For example, when George Conroy, Bishop of Ardagh in Ireland, came to this country on a mission for the Holy See in 1878, he commented on the same thing. In a lengthy report later submitted to the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide* he observed, "In the selection of Bishops, priority is given to financial abilities, rather than to pastoral." Conroy regarded the

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accumulation of large debts in the American Church as a prime evil, leading as it did to repeated calls on the people for money.

"The second evil," he said, "has been the introduciton of a new and very false criterion in the selection of subjects recommended for vacant episcopal Sees. Whenever there is deliberation to choose a candidate for the episcopacy, the Bishops of a province feel constrained to seek, at all costs, a man skilled in financial administration. Indeed, it has too often happened that the most valued gifts in the candidate proposed to the Holy See were properly those of a banker, and not of a Pastor of souls."

The Bishop of Ardagh felt keenly on this point, and he informed Cardinal Giovanni Simeoni, Prefect of Propaganda, that the priests in the United States had told him that for one to understand the pernicious results of the method of selecting bishops, all one had to do was to cast a glance at the American episcopate. For of the sixty-eight bishops at the time there were, said Conroy, "hardly *ten* who are distinguished by talents of any kind. The others scarcely attain a decent mediocrity, and in theological knowledge they do not even reach mediocrity!" It was little wonder that when Bishop Bernard McQuaid of Rochester was in Rome some months later and got wind of what he described for the Archbishop of Baltimore as "a most damaging report" (December 10, 1878), his efforts to secure a copy of the Conroy document should have proved vain.

That Bishop Conroy may, indeed, have been given some jaundiced views by certain priests, and that he may have painted the picture too bleakly, is a possibility. But no one acquainted with a predominant type among the American bishops since the first of their number was consecrated in 1790, will deny that there was—and still is—more than a grain of truth in Conroy's observations. In fact, were one to ask what has been the most persistent criticism of the bishops of this country, in all likelihood the answer would be the excessive time and attention they have devoted to their role as administrators, with a consequent neglect of other vital aspects of their office such as knowing the priests of the diocese well.

It is possible that if in the past the close personal relationships had obtained between bishops and priests that should characterize the relations of a father to his spiritual sons, more than one tragedy in the lives of the latter might have been averted. Nor is it too late to avert further tragedies that are now building up in the critical hour through which many American priests are passing. Is the area of diocesan administration not one in which numerous laymen are not only as competent, but in some instances more competent, than bishops and priests? Of course, it takes a bishop of broad and open intelligence who feels sufficiently secure in his own position to assume a permissive attitude in his relationship with subordinates, to surround himself in various diocesan offices with men—whether they be priests or laymen—noted for their original and creative minds, endowed with initiative and imagination, and at the same time, possessed of the integrity that will guarantee their strong convictions.

Such a man was the late Cardinal Meyer, Archbishop of Chicago, who during his all too brief administration of the largest of American dioceses was steadily gaining stature in the eyes of the most thoughtful of Chicago's clergy and laity. And such would seem to be the new President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop John F. Dearden of Detroit, who among the other attractive qualities that augur well for his tenure of his new post, resembles the beloved John XXIII in that he is unafraid to admit that now and then he makes a mistake. This was the case in regard to the archbishop's suggestion some time ago for gathering data about his priests through a questionnaire, a suggestion that was recalled when he learned that a sizeable number of the Detroit priests did not feel this was the best method of procedure.

Under this kind of leadership the latent talents of priests quite naturally rise to the surface to serve the Church, as they will not do under the bishop who, feeling insecure himself, resorts to authoritarian measures to awe his subjects. The latter kind will not only wish in his entourage men who are tractable and docile, but almost instinctively he will further the ecclesiastical promotion of the same type, who, he would probably reason, will not introduce disturbing innovations. With this motivation, of course, the "safe" man comes through and the more talented priest, filled with ideas for improving the Church's apostolate through adaptation to new ways and untried techniques, will be left on the sidelines.

"It is not too late to avert further tragedies in this critical hour for many priests"

With Vatican Council II the Church entered upon a new age. One of the conciliar actions that signaled the change was the Declaration on Religious Freedom which embodied a principle that, as the fathers rightly stated, "makes no small contribution to the creation of an environment in which men can without hindrance be invited to Christian faith, and embrace it of their own free will, and profess it effectively in their whole manner of life." A further manifestation of this new environment was the same council's Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, the implementation of which was detailed by Paul VI on August 6 of last year when he stated that the

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national episcopal conferences were annually to take counsel about candidates for the episcopacy in their respective countries and "propose the names of the candidates to the Apostolic See."

The first official American reaction to this directive came during the hierarchy's annual meeting in Washington, (November 14-18, 1966), in a paper read by Archbishop Joseph T. McGucken of San Francisco. At one of the daily press conferences Archbishop McGucken explained that in pursuance of the Pope's *motu proprio* of the previous August 6, two changes in the procedure of selecting names for the episcopacy would be introduced, viz., that these names would be proposed every year, rather than every two years, and they would be sent directly to the Consistorial Congregation at Rome rather than to the Apostolic Delegation. He added, however, that it was quite possible that the delegate would continue to send further names and that the final selection might then be made from either list. At the Washington meeting a committee of the hierarchy was appointed to work out the details of this new approach and to submit their recommendations at the bishops' meeting scheduled for Chicago in April. Presumably at that time the committee's recommendations will be voted on by the general body of bishops, and following Rome's approval the new procedure will thereafter govern the selection of episcopal candidates for the Church of the United States.

If the American Church is to render viable the Council's repeated emphasis on concepts such as "the dignity of the human person," that "men should act on their own judgment," and "the demand for freedom in human society," and if the Council's words are to be made real to the effect that desires of this kind are "greatly in accord with truth and justice," it is difficult to see how the present procedure of selecting bishops can remain unchanged. While an increasing number of the educated laity are maintaining that they have heard almost *ad nauseam* about their increased role in the Church, the time has probably not yet arrived for a return to the practice of the third and fourth centuries when the bishops were chosen by the general faithful. Yet some more representative method of selection should surely be adopted than the one now in vogue. Here again the Council would seem to have offered both the inspiration and the means in its directive that a priests' senate should be erected in each diocese, the members of which should act as "collaborators of the bishop. . . ." And that the fathers would appear to have envisioned something other than the traditional diocesan consultors, was indicated when they stated that to the extent necessary groups like the cathedral chapters and boards of consultors should be "reorganized in keeping with present-day needs."

No proposal touching a matter such as the selection of bishops will escape opposition and criticism; that is part of the price that must be paid for the suggestion of more democratic processes whether in Church or in State, and that is not a bad thing, for out of the clash of opinions something approximating a consensus is born. Obviously, the Catholic Church finds herself today in the midst of the gravest crisis she has experienced since the Protestant Revolt, and the American branch of the Church Universal is no exception. The most exacting demands are being made—and will continue to be made—of the bishops. It is imperative, therefore, that those chosen to lead the people of God should represent the broadest possible spectrum of their spiritual subjects, that the bishops themselves should be strengthened by the assurance and comforting presence of the best minds among their priests and laity, and that the latter, in turn, should feel the maximum confidence in their bishop's ability to pilot the ship through the angry waves and shoals that now threaten to engulf her.

Humanly speaking, no guarantee of the attainment of these desirable goals can be promised; but a greater measure of confidence can be given to that bishop who, it is known, was chosen only after the most representative body of the clergy of the diocese had been accorded an opportunity to voice its preference. This is in no sense meant to bar future participation of the faithful in the selection of names for the episcopacy; it is merely to suggest that it would seem best to take one step at a time, the first step being to associate the clergy in the bishop's selection, it being understood, of course, the right of the pope, in the words of Paul VI's *motu proprio,* "to nominate and appoint bishops freely remaining intact. . . ."

In brief, the selection of bishops like many other aspects of the Church's life would seem to call for adaptation to a new situation. In April, 1949, Cardinal Suhard treated the theme of adaptation in his notable pastoral *Priests Among Men,* when he said that for the priest to be suited to the twentieth century it was not a matter of "slavishly copying methods suited to former times nor of inventing new forms for the sake of novelty," but rather it was a question of translating "the message of Christianity into present-day terms." In the achievement of that end as it pertains to the best method of selecting American bishops, those responsible for it might well employ the figure of the late Cardinal of Paris that one should spread out on his desk two maps, the old and the new, and compare, point by point, these two "guiding plans."

In so doing he will find that "the old plan of the Church in the Christian community has its islands of influence, its strongholds, and its areas of habitual Christian practice." But he will likewise see that the other plan, that of "the new city, has its quick bridgeheads, its centers of spontaneous interest and its unexpected religious movements." Thus those whose task it is to perfect a procedure for the selection of the future bishops of the American Church should "know no rest until such time as the two plans run together, until they coincide to form but one 'city' in truth and love."

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The impact of Medicare and Medicaid

CRISIS IN MEDICINE

EDWARD T. CHASE

Since health is the only indispensable asset human beings have, the effectiveness of a nation's health care system is of fundamental importance. Indeed, "The quality of medical care is an index of a civilization," as Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur wrote in the famous 1932 report of The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care.

How does the American health care system measure up today? First of all it can be said that it is in a state of unprecedented ferment. Medicare and Medicaid—government-financed care for those 65 and over, for the poor on public assistance and the medically indigent, that is, otherwise solvent but unable to pay medical bills—are creating a revolution. They are doing so by altering the financing of services and by transforming charity patients into paying patients who, many for the first time in their lives, are using personal doctors and private facilities of their choice. Though there are problems with these programs, this represents a tremendous social advance.

On the negative side, the health care system is simultaneously in a real crisis—I use the overworked term carefully—in many localities (especially rural) and in many categories of service. The basic causes are shortages and maldistribution. The shortages of medical professors, medical schools, nurses, family doctors, interns and residents, certain specialists and decent nursing homes and hospitals are especially acute. That we should have such a crisis is a scandal, and, as we shall see, a scandal for which organized medicine's leaders bear a major share of blame. One of the benefactions of Medicare-Medicaid, hopefully, is that this legislation will dramatize the irrationalities and deficiencies of American health care. In consequence, perhaps, given the right political climate and state of the economy and a less recalcitrant medical leadership, matters can be reformed.

Medicare and Medicaid, technically Titles XVIII and XIX of Public Law 89-97, the Social Security Amendments of 1965, are the dominating factors in health care, as of 1967. The magnitude of these programs is in keeping with the magnitude of the delay in the birth of the enabling legislation. I can recall writing in the pages of *Commonweal* in 1959 about Medicare's "imminent passage." Actually the fight for Medicare dates back to 1912 but the main battles have been fought in the past quarter century. President Franklin D. Roosevelt did not press for national health insurance for the elderly in the early New Deal days because he feared he might jeopardize the success of the whole Social Security package and also—this is significant—because he was informed that our health care facilities were not up to performing the job. It is a moot question if they are today. But in the postwar period the pressure became inexorable once it became manifest that the combination of escalating medical costs, the poverty of the elderly and their high incidence of illness, was an intolerable mix. Organized medicine, meaning the American Medical Association, to its eternal shame, lied to the nation, using the best-heeled, biggest lobbying mechanism in history, to assert this was not so. The political destinies of many Congressmen, Senators and at least two Presidents were powerfully affected by the struggle.

So in 1965 what transpired with Medicare was not only hospital insurance for those 65 and over, financed through Social Security, but also the financing of doctor care in hospital, home and office and, miraculously, Title XIX, Medicaid, the so-called overlooked "sleeper" clause in the legislation. It provides for federal-state financing of health care for those on welfare and for those who are not on welfare but who are threatened with bankruptcy owing to medical costs beyond their means. Medicaid, a combined state-federal program, is slowly getting under way, so far with only 26 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands participating.

Medicare, which began last July, is now beginning to move into high gear. Some two and a half million people 65 years and over have received in-patient hospital care under Part A of Medicare. Most of them have also received doctor care, Part B of Medicare, at home or at the doctor's office, as well as in the hospital. Of the 19 million elderly, some 17½ million have signed up voluntarily for this medical insurance. Part B costs them $3 a month (which will probably go up in the next few years), matched in turn by a $3 contribution from general federal revenues. All in all, an estimated 3.5 million elderly have used doctors' services both in and out of the hospital paid by Medicare. The 6,700 hospitals involved have been reimbursed around a billion dollars. The doctors have been paid about $100 million for their services. Medicare also pays for nursing care at home after hospitalization. Some 130,000 elderly have received this service.

EDWARD T. CHASE *writes frequently on cultural and social questions for this and other magazines.*

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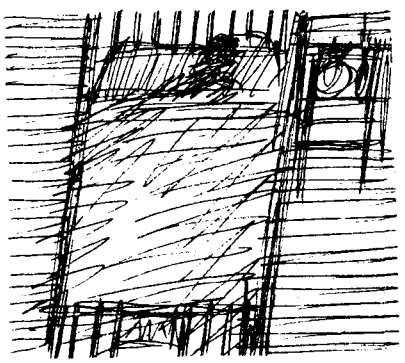
The last phase of Medicare to go into operation, on January 1, 1967, was post-hospital skilled nursing care in what the government calls "extended care facilities." About 25,000 are in such facilities now. These extended-care facilities are nursing homes but not for long-term custodial care. So far, unfortunately, that kind of care is not covered by Medicare. It is estimated that the total cost for the Medicare operation in the first full year of operation will be three and a half billion dollars.



Medicaid, or simply Title XIX as it is widely known, by being conceived as underwriting the medical care of all who cannot afford to pay, dwarfs Medicare in its potential impact. Theoretically it could cover some 35 million Americans, around a sixth of the population, when fully implemented. No one can foretell the cost but the two biggest states, New York and California, estimate costs for fiscal 1967 of $435 million and $667 million respectively. Medicaid is an extension to the indigent and medically indigent of all ages of the old (1960) Kerr-Mills law for the 65-year-olds and older. That was an AMA-approved measure designed by the doctors to stop Medicare. A jointly financed federal-state program, it was not funded by Social Security and was essentially a welfare measure based on stringent means tests. In consequence it was unpopular and unsuccessful.

Medicaid has no conventional means test—establishing eligibility is a simple matter of showing available income—but it does require state initiative in devising enabling legislation for participation. Many of the states never implemented Kerr-Mills and this could be the problem for Medicaid, even though the federal government will pick up between 50 percent and 83 percent of the tab (depending upon the states' *per capita* income). However, the pressure on the states to participate is considerable since if a state fails to develop an approved, going program by January 1, 1970, it will lose all matching funds for medical care of welfare recipients. Also, states must progressively broaden Medicaid programs to qualify for federal help so that by 1975 *all* types of persons are accommodated who cannot afford to pay for their care. This is truly revolutionary for the United States. However, because of the allegedly excessive liberality of Medicaid, there will be strong and probably successful efforts in Congress this year to restrict state criteria for their residents' eligibility to participate. One New York Congressman complains that 79 percent of his (upstate) county is eligible for Medicaid.

So far there has *not* been a sudden inundation of the hospitals owing to these programs, but it is a bit too early to say this won't happen. Hospitalization has increased by about 5 percent since Medicare's advent on July 1, 1966. Twenty-five percent of all hospital beds were occupied by those 65 and over before Medicare, now about 30 percent are. Social Security experts believe about a quarter of a million Medicare patients will be hospitalized at any one time and that Medicare will be paying between a quarter and a third of the average general hospital's expenses. Some medical experts contend that Medicare will act to *reduce* hospitalization because, fortunately, it covers home health services, home and office doctor care, outpatient clinic services and requires hospitals to review the need for a patient's hospitalization. This is in marked contrast with Blue Cross and private insurance—policies that promoted excess hospitalization because they failed to pay for out-patient care.

So vast developments are occurring under the impact of these two great programs, Medicare and Medicaid. Millions are getting needed care hitherto denied them; the 19 million elderly and their relatives are now largely relieved of the apprehension that medical costs may cause them personal financial disaster; hospitals are receiving desperately needed dependable reimbursements; there are powerful incentives for developing new nursing home and skilled nursing home care programs; facilities of all kinds are being upgraded to meet qualifying criteria; charity hospitals may become a thing of the past.

Yet crisis is in the air because of the glaring discrepancy between what the best in medical science can offer and what in fact is happening. So great is the shortage of family physicians, particularly in rural areas and in slum neighborhoods, that in effect care is often unavailable. And many hospitals are dangerously short of nurses and supporting health personnel. Meanwhile costs go up annually at a rate well in excess of the general rise in the cost of living. Because the supply of doctors is so tight, the doctors enjoy a position of great political power—they constitute a monopoly and have tremendous leverage in any dispute over policy. Perhaps this was not deliberately engineered by organized Medicare, yet the record shows that for thirty-five years the AMA insisted there was no need for concern about any impending doctor shortage despite repeated surveys and analyses that demonstrated the opposite.

"I am confident that we can prove conclusively to the government and to the people of the United States that a sufficient number of physicians is being produced," stated Dr. Dwight H. Murray, then president of the AMA in 1956, in a typical AMA attempt to discredit "alarmists." He went on to say, "the judications are that these persons

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cannot document any trend toward a shortage in 1960, 1965, or 1975."

He was just as dead wrong as his predecessor presidents and successors, though today none any longer has the temerity to distort the facts. Thus last year, thanks to AMA's self-interested campaign over the years to kill federal aid for the expansion of medical schools, nearly 10,000 students wishing to become doctors were denied the chance because there are not near enough medical schools. Only *half* of all qualified students can be accommodated! The U.S.A. just gets by, altogether unsatisfactorily, as our shocking infant mortality rates indicate, only by its use of foreign-trained interns and residents. And future prospects are frightening because in 1966 our *present* 93 medical schools were short of teachers for 1,115 posts, 160 more vacancies than in 1965, and therefore any *new* schools (13 new ones are due by 1970) will be disastrously understaffed.

Meanwhile patient loads mount under the stimulus of Medicare and Medicaid, the stimulus of expanding private health insurance and of innovations in medical science such as new techniques in surgery and in rehabilitation that offer hope of cures. The doctors have never before had it so good. Not only are they now charging their elderly and indigent patients full rates, knowing the government will guarantee most of the tab; they are also raising their rates at double the pace before Medicare came along: whereas rates were increasing at 1.1 percent per quarter in 1965, they began to rise at 2.2 percent per quarter when Medicare began in July 1966.

National Fee Schedules?

And under Medicare, Part "B" (coverage of doctor services) the doctors are soliciting patients hitherto disdained—for example the indigent aged in nursing homes —and are charging fees that cannot be controlled, under Medicare's so-called "direct billing" method. This means that the doctor bills the Medicare patient directly whatever he thinks the traffic will bear; and to get reimbursed by the government the patient must present his receipted, paid-up bill. But such patients are guaranteed only reimbursement of 80 percent of "reasonable" charges. If the doctor's charge was excessive in the first place, the Medicare patient is out of luck. Yet so far the law does not provide for any crackdown on the exploiting doctor.

But if the law doesn't work, public opinion may fairly soon. The most likely result will be the establishing of regional or statewide or conceivably even national fee schedules, stipulating exact doctor fees to be allowed. This is an AMA nightmare. If it comes, however, it will be because the profession, with its anachronistic insistence on laissez-faire medical economics, solo practice on a fee-for-service basis, brought it upon itself. Medical care could readily be treated as a public utility, subject to the regulations—like prohibition of discriminatory pricing—imposed upon other such businesses by the Robinson-Patman Act, that is, businesses which serve a vital public interest, operate in an uniformed market (a layman cannot make a reasonably sound choice of doctors), and have monopolistic power arising from scarcity of supply.

Such criticism, of course, is directed solely at the leadership of organized medicine, *not* at individual physicians. They cannot be blamed for finding their profession (and, alas, the public) ill served by functioning within the profit system. The literature about medicine (non-clinical literature) has become singularly a literature of protest. Why? Because the record shows that deficiencies in service, corrupt practice, and all the most repellent abuses in medicine, like fee splitting and unnecessary surgery, are traceable to organized medicine's insistence upon conceiving of the economics and organization of practice as a *business* or *trade*, not as a profession. Medicare and Medicaid, by showing the system under unprecedented strain, are bound to act so as to expose this perversity.

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JOANNE CHILDERS

MOVING MOTHER OUT

With tapestry, tassels, ornament, furnishings
We knew by heart the trolls packed up the van,
While the antique dealers took her antique things—
The chord-wrong Baby Grand, Big Ben.

The Goodwill explored the attic, dug, exhumed
A crypt of canvases, books, a chest of oak.
Shaila's diaries, letters of love, perfumed,
Went up in a random smoke.

How arrow-like the desk from Father's room
Went out in unspeakable silence, devoid of print,
While the view from the window beside was divested of bloom
And the bird had no argument.

The creepers on the shed flew neutral stems.
Robert's rackets and bats, inside, were packed, secure,
For the walled-in children at their thin, hard games.
Some emblems, mixed, endure.

Mother stands at a ladder, inside, and holds a box
Of empty medicine bottles, baubles, spools,
Sympathy cards and pictures, keys and locks,
Knick-knacks and bits of tools

And catches her breath. Her filmed eyes, subtle, harden,
Her dry hands emphasize her fall from grace,
While the lengthening sunlight in the trellised garden
Picks out a certain angel face.

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After Charles Davis

THE McCABE AFFAIR

THE EDITORIAL

The Charles Davis case continues to shake Catholics in England. In the most recent example, Father Herbert McCabe, O.P., was removed from his post as editor of New Blackfriars *and even for a time suspended from his priestly functions, as a result of an editorial on the Davis case which he wrote for* New Blackfriars. *Father McCabe is well known in Britain and the United States for his writings and his lectures, and Commonweal readers will remember him for his contribution of a Catholic view in our recent debate on the New Morality. The editorial written by him which produced the recent furor is reproduced in full below, followed by the comments of our correspondent in Britain, J. M. Cameron.*

To most of our contributors and many of our readers, Charles Davis' decision to leave the Catholic Church must have come primarily as a personal shock. He is known and loved by so many of us that it seems almost unseemly to discuss the event in public rather than by private letter. However, his own dignified and candid public statements (his initial announcement to the press conference and, especially, his article in the *Observer*) have, as it were, given his friends permission to discuss, if not his choice, at least the reasons which seem to him to justify it. It could not, in any case, have been a private event: it is the most important thing that has happened in the Catholic Church in England for half a century. If this Church cannot contain her foremost theologian (and only a quite special theological ignorance and frivolity could see him as "lightweight") then we must look again very hard both at the Church and at the theology.

First of all, though, it is worth thinking about the probable effects of his action. There are likely to be two opposite reactions, neither of which need become fully articulate and both of which may co-exist in the minds of many Catholics. The first is to feel that there must be something wrong with "progressive" theology if it leads such a man to leave the Church. The second is to feel that there must be something wrong with the Church if he cannot stay in. Because of the first, progressive theologians are liable once more to come under suspicion, but the second might just possibly lead to a real examination of conscience in the Church. If this latter effect should come about we need not be unduly worried about the first. There was in any case something a little unnatural in the respectability that progressive and original theologians suddenly acquired during and immediately after the Council. A new elite of "right-thinking people" was gradually forming, and the need to be in tune with this orthodoxy was beginning to stifle critical judgment. There were signs, even, of a rather brutal and triumphalist radicalism which could be just as indifferent to persons and to truth as could episcopal authority. There are a certain number of people who could jump off the bandwagon without doing the cause of theology any harm.

Brian Wicker has rightly compared Charles Davis' departure to a martyrdom, an act of witness, "In him the Church looks at itself from the outside, and understands from that perspective the depth of its own corruption." (*Guardian* January 5th). It may, however, be doubted whether even witness on this scale, a shock of this magnitude, will really shake the complacency of the Church in England. It is, unfortunately, more likely that Catholics will convince themselves that this is a "personal tragedy," that (with the friendliness that characterizes Catholicism in England) they will feel compassion for Charles Davis, think vaguely that he must have had some difficult times with the authorities—and leave it at that.

If we are to go beyond this reaction we shall have to take more seriously the reasons he gives. "The official Church is racked by fear, insecurity and anxiety, with a consequent intolerance and lack of love."

The Charges

"There is concern for authority at the expense of truth, and I am constantly saddened by instances of the damage done to persons by the workings of an impersonal and unfree system." These charges seem to me to be very well founded and their truth would, on the whole, be taken for granted by English Catholics. The Church is quite plainly corrupt: a Cardinal selects Christmas as the occasion for supporting the murder of Vietnamese civilians; the Pope alleges that the Church's teaching is not in doubt about birth control; the Congregation of Rites has just asserted (*Times* January 5th) that a family communion celebrated in a private home and followed by a meal is a practice "alien to the Catholic religion," while nearer home and more comically, a Bishop has expressed the fear that Catholics who sing carols in Anglican churches are endangering their faith and morals. This is the kind of thing we have come to expect of Cardinals and Popes and Bishops and Curial Congregations. It is for that very reason that Pope John and Cardinal Bea and Bishop Bekkers startle us so much. But to say this

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too cheerfully may be to evade the issue. We have grown accustomed to seeing the Church like this; so accustomed that we are surprised when a man gives it as his reason for suddenly leaving the Church—almost as though he had seen it for the first time. We have lived with this truth so long that we have perhaps forgotten how scandalous and horrible it is: like people who live with racial discrimination and slavery. We have to ask, in fact, whether we are those who, as Charles Davis puts it, "remain Roman Catholics only because they live their Christian lives on the fringe of the institutional Church and largely ignore it." I think not; but in order to defend a position which is that of many Catholics who would ordinarily have been thought more "radical" than Charles Davis and who have no intention of leaving the Church, we must look more closely at this phrase, "institutional Church."

Consider a few institutions: Spode House, the Newman Theology Groups, the Union of Catholic Students, the Young Christian Workers, University Chaplaincies, the Catholic press including even *New Blackfriars*. None of these are exclusively for Catholics but no sociologist would hesitate to describe them as Roman Catholic institutions. It is within institutions such as these that a great many Catholics nourish their Christian lives. It is not true that merely because the dynamic of their lives is not derived from sermons or "religious education" that it therefore comes from outside the institutions of the Church. To think so would be to betray a clericalist view of what counts as a Catholic institution. If there is a group which is characteristically on the fringe of the institutions of the Church in this sense, and which largely ignores them, it is the Bishops. Nonetheless without the overall and relatively impersonal structure of the hierarchy these Roman Catholic institutions could not exist. Nobody in England expects to be guided and encouraged in his Christian life by pastoral letters—it is a matter for gratified astonishment when these have any theological content at all; this is not what we have come to expect of our Bishops. Perhaps in some more adequate Church we could ask for more, but at the present time in England they provide merely an administrative context within which the really vital and immediately relevant institutions can exist. That the established hierarchy is also a hindrance to these groups is only too obvious and only to be expected. A dialectical tension between the framework of the Church and its points of growth seems to be a condition of Christian existence.

It is one thing, however, to talk of a dialectical tension implied in the very idea of an historical Church, and quite another to excuse the corruptions and follies that are peculiar to our own time and place. What does not need to be endured indefinitely is the special irrelevance of so much of the behavior of Church officials. Alongside the actual agony of growth in the Church there seem to be these men playing a private game amongst themselves in which the moves are directives and prohibitions and the players score points for formally going through the motions of docility or of repeating the orders correctly. It seems to me that we should treat this game as we do the fantasies of adolescence or any of the other ways in which men escape from reality; we should combine a firm determination to get rid of it eventually with a certain tolerance of it while it is being played. While Church authorities are occupied with these domination games they are neglecting their true role. It would be quite unrealistic to expect them to be sources of enthusiasm and original thought but it is their basic task to be the link between such sources, the framework within which they are kept in balance. To maintain this balance they must, of course, speak with authority, the real authority that comes with understanding and concern and listening to others; the authority that sees itself not in terms of power but as a service to the community, the channel of communication by which each part of the community is kept in touch with the whole, a whole that extends through time as well as space.

I have not found this point better expressed than in a passage which I use with some reluctance because it may seem unfair to quote a statement which its author perhaps would now repudiate. It is from Charles Davis' preface to Rosemary Haughton's magnificent book *On Trying to be Human*:

> "When honesty means the dominance of personal reference as a criterion of truth, then the content of Christian tradition is accepted in so far as it is personally meaningful and personally liberating. Ultimately, however, this makes one a prisoner of a limited experience . . . Fortunately the great tradition of Christian teaching and the thought of the great masters of Christian theology and spirituality have been handed down to us by generations faithful to authority when much in what they passed on was not to them personally very meaningful."

It is because we believe that the hierarchical institutions of the Roman Catholic Church, with all their decadence, their corruption and their sheer silliness, do in fact link us to areas of Christian truth beyond our own particular experience and ultimately to truths beyond any experience, that we remain, and see our Christian lives in terms of remaining, members of this Church.

One final point, If history can teach us anything, then we should have learned from the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the slow difficult process of healing that we call the Ecumenical movement that the concept of "leaving" the Church is not as simple as it looks. Roman Catholics no longer see the reunion of Christian Churches in terms of a "return" or a "submission" of other Churches to the Church they have left. We recognize that however disastrous such separations may be, they have their place in the mysterious plan of God, that perhaps certain Christian insights could never have been

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achieved without the painful cycle of a separation followed on both sides by a groping towards reconciliation. A condition for bringing good out of the evil of schism is that both parties should repent, reexamine their positions and be ready to learn from and be forgiven by each other. It is not absolutely out of the question that the Roman Catholic Church in England should discover how to do this; it is not out of the question that Charles Davis should find himself with us once more in an altered and more human Church.

"DISGRACEFUL AFFAIR"

Leeds

The first blow has fallen. Herbert McCabe of the Order of Preachers, whose brilliant contribution to the debate on "the New Morality" is known to readers of *Commonweal,* has just been ejected from his editorial chair at *New Blackfriars* and suspended for a time, from his priestly functions. The former is reported to be at the instance of the Dominican Master-General; it is not clear at the moment who was responsible for this second, appalling act. The immediate cause of all this is the editorial he wrote in the current issue of *New Blackfriars.* This commented on the case of Charles Davis, emphasized that Davis was essentially right in his charge that the Church is corrupt, and gave as examples Cardinal Spellman's call for total victory in Vietnam and the ambiguities of Pope Paul's recent pronouncement on contraception.

There may be some doubt over Father McCabe's wisdom in choosing precisely the language he did in which to set out his argument. But men are not, one presumes, stripped of their offices and forbidden to exercise their characteristic functions over matters of taste. It must be the case, first, that what Father McCabe substantially had to say was judged to be scandalous and deserving of some public rebuke, and secondly, that the period inaugurated by Davis's leaving the Church is to be marked in England by a tightening of discipline and the singling out for special attention of those who are thought to be dangerous.

A certain kind of opinion betrays so much impudence in the man who holds the opinion that we are inclined to suppose that he can't really understand what it is he is saying; for if he did he would die of shame. For instance, it is not uncommon for Europeans in Africa, notably in Rhodesia, to point to the spectacle of Africans killing each other in battle, or massacring civilians, as proof that Africans, unlike Europeans, are incapable of self-government. That of all peoples in the world the Europeans have the least right to use this argument never occurs to them. Those who are scandalized by *New Blackfriars* or by periodicals that take a similar line in France or Holland strike me as manifesting this kind of unconscious impudence. The priest who writes a syndicated column in the United States may express a maniacal hatred of men engaged in what he believes to be a vast international Communist (or Masonic) conspiracy and the expression of this may be so frenetic that one almost sees the foam on his lips; reckless accusations against the characters of public men may be advanced; and yet the notion that such a man should be dismissed or suspended from his priestly functions would raise a laugh in any episcopal chancery. (How many years did Father Coughlin spew out his anti-Semitic filth without imperilling his ecclesiastical standing?) Priests and bishops may applaud the activities of governments that drop mustard gas on Ethiopians or spend Good Friday in the invasion of Albania, they may petition their governments against the recognition of conscientious objection to military service, they may oppose the rights of trade unionists or fawn upon a Franco or a Salazar; and none of these things will have the slightest effect upon their ecclesiastical standing. But let a priest or even an abbot, a bishop or an archbishop (Quebec in the days of Duplessis or Catalonia today may be called to bear witness) raise his voice for social justice or for civil liberty, then such a man had better take care. He may not be touched, increasingly today he is unlikely to be censured openly; but he is regarded as a scandalous person by all those men of the ecclesiastical apparatus who were discomfited by the Second Vatican Council and are now busily reconstructing the power that only the other day seemed to be crumbling.

These ecclesiastical Bourbons will remember that in the pontificate of Pius XII the kind of thing that has happened to Father McCabe happened to almost every French Dominican of any reputation. Not to have been inhibited in some respect or other became in the French Province of the Order almost a sign of mediocrity. That this policy, marked at the time by personal tragedies for which the Roman bureaucracy bears a painful responsibility, ended in a fiasco is known to everybody, even to Cardinal Ottaviani. The difference between that period and this is that the laity are no longer simply the bemused spectators of the ecclesiastical drama. They are participants and will do what they can to change the course of events in such a way that it won't any longer be necessary to wait passively for history to show that foolish policies end in a fiasco. What is in question is not the rightness or wrongness, the wisdom or folly, of the editorial direction of *New Blackfriars.* What is in question is the fundamental issue of free speech in the Church, and above all free speech for the clergy and the religious. We should be very happy here to think that the local ecclesiastical authorities were doing all they could to bring about Father McCabe's rehabilitation. A full rehabilitation would be the only satisfactory end to this disgraceful affair.

J. M. CAMERON

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NO KNACK

THE SCREEN

It becomes obvious as more and more zany comedies turn up in the cycle about young folk today that Richard Lester's movies like "The Knack" and the Beatles' films at the beginning of the trend spoiled us for what was to come. They had a lyrical and light-hearted free-wheeling quality that their imitators can't quite seem to capture in celluloid; and most of the new items would work out better as shorts than as full-length features.

"You're a Big Boy Now," written and directed by 27-year-old Francis Ford Coppola, tries hard enough as it relates a wacky tale about a virginal young fellow who's a roller-skating stack-boy in the New York public library. The role is played with a certain charm and naive nuttiness by Peter Kastner, who was the wayward lad in the Canadian "Nobody Waved Goodbye." And he is surrounded by a good cast: Rip Torn as the boy's father, a library curator; Geraldine Page as his doting mother who won't let go; Julie Harris as his kooky landlady when the boy moves out on his own; Elizabeth Hartman as the wild Greenwich Village discotheque girl the boy falls for; Karen Black as the nice librarian who falls for him; and several others, all of whom try to hurry or delay the boy's steps toward manhood.

Some of this is quite funny as the foolish plot progresses, especially when director Coppola illustrates the imaginative boy's free association of ideas. Seeing subway graffiti: "Niggers Go Home," the boy jumps from "But where's home?" to "Home is where the heart is" to "But my heart's in the highlands" to a wonderful shot of Negroes in kilts swinging across the hills to bagpipe music. Funny sight gags and amusing *non sequiturs,* however, do not compensate for the amateurish touches and dull stretches of forced humor when the film strains too hard to be too far out. Some of Richard Lester's lyrical bounce would have helped; but 90 minutes of this "Big Boy" palls. It would have made a fine 30-minute short.

I doubt if "Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad" would have made even a good 20-minute short. The project was ill-fated to start with and Arthur Kopit's satirical play on momism should have stayed on an off-Broadway stage where it started. Instead producer Ray Stark and director Richard Quine prettied it up with an outstanding cast and some lovely color photography of Jamaica where it was made. Like "Big Boy Now," "Oh Dad" is about a pure, mother-dominated young man who resists the efforts of a young woman to seduce him. But "Oh Dad" is much farther out than "Big Boy"—so far out in fact that the audience makes no contact with it at all; and all the camera does

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is to expose its material as sick, sick, sick.

Mom, (over-played by Rosalind Russell in a series of outlandish costumes and wigs) travels with her dead husband (Joanthan Winters) who's kept in a coffin and with her thumb-sucking son (overplayed by Robert Morse). While mom is busily trying to seduce wealthy Hugh Griffith, babysitter Barbara Harris goes to work on sonny. And if you think any of this is funny, you're mistaken. Report has it that when the film was finished about a year ago, it was so awful that its makers decided to fix it up by enlarging Winters' role which they did by giving him a running narration with a lot of wisecracks to explain what's going on and make the sick stuff seem funnier. All that happened was they made it more obviously sick. The really sad thing about "Oh Dad" is that such a first-rate cast should be wasted on this tripe. Even Richard Lester couldn't have helped this one.

Just to show what the French are up to in this cycle about young folk, "To Be a Crook" is being released here now. This is an earlier film of Claude Lelouch whose excellent "A Man and a Woman" may send audiences running to it. While it has some good points, anyone expecting this funny-tragic picture to be another "Man and Woman" will be sadly disappointed. It tells a story of four young factory workers who are film fans and so enamored of movies that they decide to give up their jobs and become crooks like the stars in those thrillers they adore. So far, so amusing, as they go about imitating their heroes and learning their wicked ways. But not so funny is the outcome of their adventures and capers. Nicely acted by unknowns, "To Be a Crook" is poignant as well as satirical; and if producer-director-writer Lelouch is trying to provide anything other than entertainment, he is telling us that young folk today better snap out of the dream world of movies and face reality. So help them, they better.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

A NOVEL PLAY

THE STAGE

Why can't a play be more like a novel? Why can't the simple action of the drama, a slow rise to a climax and a quick subsidence, be replaced by something of the rhythmic action of the novel, with a series of high points offering a cumulative effect rather than one loud *bang*! Why can't there be overt discussion of character rather than simple dramatic presentation? Why not frank philosophical and sociological asides? Why must the play focus on one or two persons instead of affording the extended treatment of a number of characters as in the novel? As Norman Mailer asks in a recent article, why must the play go off like one big firecracker instead of a series of firecrackers? He has been occupying himself with these questions for some years now in his attempts to dramatize his sprawling novel, "The Deer Park," into a form which fits the very different dimensions of the stage. His answers are currently available in an off-Broadway production of "The Deer Park" and what he says is that all is possible. But his evidence is not completely convincing.

First off, Mr. Mailer runs into trouble with his narrator. A narrator, even an uninvolved one, can serve a very real purpose in the mechanism of the novel. There is a lot he can do—set the "stage" with his own authenticity, provide the necessary background, in general act as the voice of the author's omniscience a step removed. His own personality can be developed as a barometer of the intensity and the meaningfulness of his experiences, however vicarious. Traditionally, the theater has not needed this device because your characters are, after all, *there*, to be judged on how they appear, how they behave, what they say about themselves and others. The narrator in Mailer's novel, if I remember it correctly, was, as in the play, one Sergius O'Shaughnessy, a former Air Force flyer now back from the wars with some money in his pocket and a sort of sexual entree into a circle of Hollywood types in a plush California resort. In the play, however, Sergius has withered away to a nearly extraneous figure, elbowed out of the action early and returning at intervals only to make doleful but otherwise irrelevant remarks.

Secondly, Mailer has attempted to move nearly all of his numerous characters from the book to the play, and with them the numerous plot convolutions and the lengthy time span. Here he has been remarkably successful, all in all. The dozen or more characters have all been very neatly and economically "realized" even when they are no more elaborate than the tyrannical studio head or the vindictive gossip columnist. His method is the use of numerous brief black-out scenes which manage to be pointed and often surprisingly funny from an author with a generally very clench-jawed view of life.

Thirdly, Mailer has been unable to resist a great deal of very undramatic commentary on the action. No, not a great deal at that, but enough to slow it up awkwardly at intervals. The play runs three hours in the version I saw just before the postponed opening and its author had not yet been able to convince himself that the "set speeches" had to go. These are delivered by the narrator and others, notably by the central character, an aging left-wing director who is struggling with his conscience. Action halts while we get their ideas on war, courage, love, sex, honesty. The device is hard on the actors too, who have not succeeded in integrating the speeches into the remainder of their performances.

But the odd and awkward thing about these speeches is that they really are necessary to the play if it is to rise above a sort of "Grand Hotel" level of sexual and psycho-

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logical intrigue. Nevertheless, they remain intrusive, never quite the voice of the character speaking but of the author. The banality of lines such as "You don't love *me*! you love my body" clashes with the falsely "elevated" tone of the front-and-center speeches. They are undigested lumps in the texture of the play. And they are too broad in their implications—not really arising from the rough and tumble sexual action of the story. They try to cover everything.

And that is probably the basic flaw in the play as it stands. The traditions of the drama are changing over the years and never so rapidly as today. The sort of a play that Mailer envisages is a real possibility if recent audacities in the theater are any portent. But instead of the series of arresting bangs! that Mailer hopes for in his work each succeeding bang goes off with a somewhat diminished effect. Simple physical and mental fatigue is partly responsible no doubt, but what it comes down to is that if that last bang isn't a very loud one all you've got on your hands is anti-climax. When you get to your punch-line your audience is asleep. You can only make one big statement in a play—even Shakespeare couldn't beat that rule.

It is a shame that "The Deer Park" doesn't cope with its problems more successfully because with its faults it is a far more interesting play than nine out of ten that come along—even if you are not in tune with Mailer's eccentricities. Novelists have a notoriously bad record in their dogged attempts to switch to drama and Mailer's polemic turn of mind boded ill for him from the beginning. But "The Deer Park" is still worth seeing for its partial success. (*At the Theatre de Lys.*) WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

BOOKS

A new crop of Vietnam books

The Bitter Heritage
ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.
Houghton, Mifflin, $3.95

Why Vietnam?
FRANK TRAGER
Praeger, $4.95

Vietnam Seen Between East and West
EDIT. SIBNARAYAN RAY
Praeger, $5.95

Hell In A Very Small Place
BERNARD B. FALL
Lippincott, $8.95

DENNIS HALE

Our Vietnam policy has suddenly acquired a history; whether that is a valuable development remains to be seen. As Professor Schlesinger notes, history is mainly "inscrutable"; its lessons are always ambivalent, frequently specious, and not generally applicable. And America has been especially inept at interpreting historical lessons: one reason, Schlesinger argues, for her clumsy foreign policy.

Schlesinger was an advisor to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson from 1961 to 1964. What his thoughts on the inscrutability of history were then, or what he thought of the arguments presented in his book, we do not know. He was a government official then, and not an historian, so perhaps it doesn't matter. At any rate, the present book is a well-argued attack on our Vietnam policy and the conduct of the war. "Counter-insurgency," escalation, and strategic bombing are taken to task in good order. The war is seen as costing too much in terms of lives, money, and domestic tranquility. A "new McCarthyism" is predicted, and President Johnson is thought to be wasting his potential in a futile war.

All in all, a very good job. Pity it has come so late.

Pity, also, that the work is vitiated in the end by the author's refusal to make a final choice between supporting the war and opposing it. Schlesinger has apparently spent many sleepless nights agonizing over the position recorded here—he wants to support the war, but it is so ghastly, so stupid. Yet, in the end he says we have "drawn the line" and must defend it. The only question is how.

The answer is found in the chapter "A Middle Course," reprinted from the *Times Magazine*. The middle course, it turns out, involves doing everything we are doing, but less of it; it entails muddling through and pleasing everyone, the hawks, the doves, the South Vietnamese, and the opinion polls. Does this policy sound familiar? Have we heard it all before? Well, history is mainly inscrutable, you see, and. . . .

But Schlesinger looks good next to Frank Trager. *Why Vietnam?* is a defense of American policy that never falters and never retreats. It is all there, all about "gallant" Ngo Dinh Diem and his "flawed" character, who "tended to overlook such issues as freedom of the press, the honesty of elections, . . . and the rights of the legitimate opposition," but who was nevertheless responsible for "genuine improvements in the lives of the South Vietnamese . . . that helped sustain their resistance to Communist dictatorship." An interesting section on the inadequacy of the Geneva Agreements is scarred by self-righteous boasting about how America only agreed to "abide" by the agreements but did not sign them. We are, therefore, blameless in the ensuing violations of the spirit and letter of Geneva. Ho Chi Minh is a bloody tyrant for refusing to hold honest elections. Ngo Dinh Diem's refusal, however, is evidence of his sophisticated understanding that South Vietnam was not "ready" for democracy. The insurgency in Vietnam is not a civil war, not a revolution, but an "invasion" whose source is Hanoi and Peking. America is honor-bound to come to the aid of South

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Vietnam. Russia and China are "intervening." And so on; a terribly smug and exasperating treatise, which you are hereby advised to ignore.

Sibnarayan Ray does a better job of defending American policy, although his "international symposium" could have been enlivened by the presence of some opposition. His collection is an interesting history of political problems in Southeast Asia, plus largely undistinguished restatements of old arguments: South Vietnam, for all its faults, is better than North Vietnam; Mao Tse Tung is embarking on the conquest of Asia, and Saigon must therefore be defended at all costs.

The most attractive essay is by Professor Arnold Beichman of Columbia. His is a valiant and humane argument for an American policy that would "revolutionize" the Third World before the Communists do it. An echo of President Kennedy's demand that America offer the Vietnamese "a political, economic and social revolution far superior to anything the Communists can offer," it stands in a long and largely honorable American tradition, one that has followed, unfortunately, in the train of less appealing policies.

For Beichman is forced to admit that, after twenty-odd years, the American revolution in Vietnam has failed to materialize, that by now it might be too late, and that in any event we are destroying the country in the process of "saving" it. Unlike many liberals, Beichman is as sincerely disturbed by the brutality of Saigon as by the dictatorship in Hanoi: his only request is that, in spite of Saigon, we take a side and oppose Communist attempts to "exploit" poverty. He cannot understand why "so-called liberals" hang back and are more tolerant of Hanoi than Saigon, why they demand democracy from Nguyen Cao Ky but not from Ho Chi Minh.

The answer is contained in his own analysis: Americans are not being asked to die for Ho Chi Minh and if they were they would rightly refuse. Why, then, should they be anxious to sacrifice themselves for Ngo Dinh Diem and his ilk? Here is the real question that Schlesinger, Trager, *et. al.* fail to ask: Why

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should we prefer a dictatorship of landlords, gangsters, and ambitious generals to one run by Party bureaucrats? Why should we prefer a nation that has killed thousands in its "pacification" campaign to one that killed thousands in its agricultural "reforms"? Indeed, why should the Vietnamese? Until good men like Beichman insist on an answer to that question, they will always be frustrated in their attempts to bring justice to the world. So long as they must follow in the steps of men who love order more than reform, and who think it better for others to be dead than red, their good intentions will be put to evil use.

Bernard Fall's new book will give devotees of military history an interesting respite from the literature on contemporary Vietnam. *Hell in a Very Small Place* is a record of incredible stupidity, the product, one suspects, of sheer frustration. The French, who had tried their own brand of "counter-insurgency" and had seen it fail, decided (without abandoning the old policy) to escalate their war. Dien Bien Phu, a large, isolated valley in northwest Vietnam near Laos, was to be both a "mooring base" for commando-type sorties (the old policy), and at the same time a piece of bait designed to lure the North Vietnamese into a large, conventional battle. This is, naturally, a totally contradictory scheme. As Fall suggests, there is probably no explanation for it save pure folly. But each half of the plan was carried out: Dien Bien Phu was made light enough to be a "mooring base," and was given just enough crack troops and equipment to tempt the overwhelmingly superior forces of General Giap. The rest of the drama was predictable: the garrison was annihilated.

If there is a lesson for Americans in this tale, it is that the price of too much optimism is dead bodies. The French were optimistic precisely because their previous policy left them no alternative, no room for defeat, however minor. Fall notes that by the first month of the garrison's existence many had begun to doubt the wisdom of trying to defend it. But no one spoke up, and second thoughts were confined to carefully preserved memoranda that could be produced later as evidence of better sense. Once the decision had been made to "win" in Indochina, defeatism could legitimately be labelled treason. Since defeat in the field would mean dishonor (and defeat in the next election) all measures—including self-delusion and fake press releases—were taken to prevent that defeat. They all contributed to making it larger.

Is America travelling the same road? Not quite: Johnson is not as intransigent as France in 1954. But there are echoes, some from highly respectable quarters, of the fatal stubbornness of France. And one of them, unfortunately, can be found in Schlesinger's comment that "Our national security may not have compelled us to draw a line across Southeast Asia where we did, but, having drawn it, we cannot lightly abandon it. Our stake in... Vietnam may have been self-created, but it has none the less become real."

Maybe

BURT BLECHMAN

Prentice-Hall, $4.95

IRVING MALIN

Myra Russell, the heroine of this novel, is a troubled widow. She does not know how to spend her time. She tries pills, chess, books, lectures, visits to her son—all of these, however, cannot lift her out of "lulls": "lulls: the cause of war, the cause of divorce, the cause of crime, the cause of sex, the cause of art, the cause which must be preserved at all costs." Because she is so desperate and empty, she sees the horror of our apathetic existence.

But Myra's vision is "simple." Often we believe that she fragments life—or, better yet, destroys it—as a result of her severely limited needs and beliefs. She reduces sex, for example, to an ineffective cure of lulls: "The trouble with sex is, it doesn't work. All that effort for so little pleasure." Is it her advanced age—she turns sixty in the novel—which makes her discount such pleasure? Are we to sympathize with this point of view? Does Blechman agree with her?

I raise this problem of non-selective vision because Myra's favorite cure is meditation. Although we follow her physical movements from Wall Street to Canada, we are always in her consciousness. We feel trapped; we don't know whether or not to explore the world for ourselves. When she regains her composure at the end of the novel—she realizes that hope and love coexist with lulls—we are mystified. Has her illness improved? Or does her acceptance of positive "maybes" signify her ultimate descent into dreamland? Blechman doesn't tell us because, as I have suggested, he is too close to Myra's "condition" to evaluate it clearly.

Not only is there uncertainty about the meaning of the novel—there is also uncertainty about its tone. Myra is, at times, a comical stereotype—the busy widow who runs everywhere and joins everything—and thus the object of scorn. But, at other times, she expresses an unusual, deep pessimism which, we know, is usually approved by Blechman. The range is from negation (satire) to approval (realism), but in this narrow, private novel, it helps to *dehumanize* Myra.

I find that I have spent so much time on failures of tone and philosophy that I have also fragmented things. There are many scenes in this novel—it is structured on abrupt or repetitive changes of scene—that survive the condition of Myra (or Blechman?). The unmasking of the swimming instructor; the meaningless visits to the physician; the jolts of painful mortality—these are brilliantly done. Perhaps they can be suggested by this brief description of Myra's filling:

" 'Open', commands the dentist. Her jaws part, ready for the sudden jab, the searing gouge, the insufferable roar. A strange way to spend an afternoon. Temporary. But then, when she's in her seventies and her schedule has ground

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REVIEWERS

DENNIS HALE is co-editor of *The New Student Left* and an editor of *The Activist.*

IRVING MALIN edited *Saul Bellow and the Critics* (N.Y.U. Press).

ARTHUR A. COHEN is the author of *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew* (Pantheon).

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to a total standstill, maybe she'll occupy her day by returning for a refill."

Blechman is most effective when he concisely describes violent pain, and when he finds, as he does here, the right "objective" symbol. (We feel that the dentist attacking Myra is life itself drilling into her.) The "sudden jab"—this phrase captures his philosophy of life and art. Because he doesn't really jab us in this novel, he makes us succumb to confusion and apathy: *Maybe*, for the most part, lulls us into ambiguous sleep.

Lev Shestov: Athens and Jerusalem

TRANS. BERNARD MARTIN

Ohio University Press, $7.50

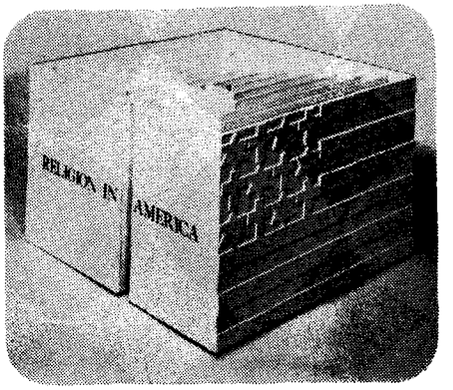
ARTHUR A. COHEN

Lev Isaakovich Schwarzmann, the son of a prosperous Jewish merchant of Kiev, chose early to be known by the pseudonym, Shestov. Shestov concealed the man Schwarzmann; the passionate, inflammatory prose of Shestov's French and Russian critical and philosophic writing, though it seems autobiographical, reveals nothing about the man Schwarzmann, though it tells us ever so much about the pseudonymous person, Shestov. Indeed, reading *Athens and Jerusalem*, the last work Shestov was to complete shortly before his death in 1938, one is struck by the fact that Shestov is to Schwarzmann no less a device of revelation than were the mnemonic names which the prophets of Israel often assumed, concealing their real identity in order better to arouse, agitate, and dismay the contented ignorant.

Alas, the device fails (or does it?) for few know Shestov, much less Schwarzmann. Shestov is unknown in the United States and England. Only four of his books have ever been translated into English; his works are generally out of print even in France, where he lived in self-imposed exile from 1919 until his death; and though a complete edition is promised in France and Germany, his works are generally unread. However, to be unread does not always mean to be without influence. *Many* people do not make a reputation—one will do if it is the right one (remember Joseph and Pharaoh or Isaiah and King Hezekiah). Enough then to note that it was D. H. Lawrence who introduced S. S. Koteliansky's translation of Shestov's, *Apotheosis of Groundlessness* (published under the title, *All Things are Possible*, 1920) and Albert Camus who devoted a long interpretative section of *The Myth of Sisyphus* to Shestov's vision of the ultimate absurdity of rationalism and the revolt of man's primordial freedom against necessity and the irremediable.

Already it may be said I have read Shestov before. I have read him in Kierkegaard or Heidegger, in Sartre or in Dostoevsky. Shestov is only another existentialist bell-ringer; he tricks himself out with false names like Kierkegaard's Johannes Climacus; he tells us everything in a loud, clangorous, unrelenting voice, with repetitions and with aphorisms, with shouts and with wheedles, a veritable *vox clamans in deserto*. Perhaps, perhaps, but much more, for D. H. Lawrence is right in one important respect regarding him: Shestov does administer one of the last kicks to the ailing body of the West. He is the best of Russia (the historian of Russian philosophy, V. V. Zenkovsky, regards him as more "profound and significant" than even Berdyaev), for he incapsulates as well all that is vague, imprecise, and unsystematic in Russian thought.

Unlike many among his academic predecessors, Shestov has absolutely no enthusiasm for the achievement of western rationalism or empiricism. It not only bores him, it scandalizes him. If philosophy, he declares, does not enable man to tap the limitless resources of his own freedom, a freedom which is itself not outside, but within contradiction and illogicality, then it is a false freedom, in fact, it is the incarnation of unfreedom. More radically than Kierkegaard (whose work he only began to read late in his life at the suggestion of his friend and philosophic enemy, Edmund Husserl), Shestov affirms the necessity of breaking outside all the canons of thought—not the particular, subjective, concrete man against the System as Kierkegaard would suggest, but simply Man, who is neither particular nor general except insofar as



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one feels obliged to defend his existence against universal claims of reason.

Kierkegaard, however much beloved to Shestov, is a sell-out, for Kierkegaard feels obliged to polemicize against the System with the rhetoric of the System. Actually, every thinker whom it might be thought would be congenial to Shestov is finally anathema to him—Socrates and Plato, St. Augustine and Plotinus, Meister Eckhardt and Angelus Silesius, in part, even Dostoevsky and N. N. Berdyaev. They all give in, surrendering the treasure of their freedom for a portion in the kingdom of knowledge and ends. Shestov rejects all these and stands alone, completely and courageously solitary.

Athens and Jerusalem, Shestov's philosophic masterpiece, excellently translated and introduced by Bernard Martin, comes to us now, as Shestov comes to us now, out of place and date. Had it been published in the forties, before the time of existentialism, crisis theology, death of god marathons, secular city barterings and situation ethics, Shestov might have stood a chance. He might even have been launched as Leslie Fiedler launched Simone Weil, another Jew in distemper, but, as it is, Shestov is too late. It is however his very lateness that makes him all the more important. The very fact that he defined the absurdity of reason well before its hegemony had been compromised by both existentialists and logical analysts makes his polemic all the more valuable.

Athens and Jerusalem makes it clear: man can't have it both ways. On the one hand he cannot affirm the sovereign independence of reason, the autonomy of the will, the irrelevance of God and his judgments upon human history and continue to ask that history have meaning, that life be fulfilled and death overcome, that pain and suffering be banished, that freedom and intelligence be unconfined. One, but not both, Shestov insists with what Camus calls his "admirable monotony." You can have Athens and its legacy of luminous reason, a reason which vindicates the decision of Adam to taste the fruit, but makes Adam and his descendants forever dependent upon the necessity of reason or you can take Jerusalem in which man lives and sins before a God whose very divinity is defined by his ability to compass, invade, and overturn all human invention and contrivance.

It is man who makes necessity rule, not God. For God there can only be freedom and destiny, never necessity and fate. Human freedom must destroy the untruth of thought—a radical contradiction in itself—precisely because Shestov does not consider the truths produced by thought to be true. They are approximations to thought, they comport with logic, they follow from reason, but their truth is not within life. Indeed Shestov would argue that the only truths which can liberate are those which are born within the contradictions of life, canceling out logic and reason. And is this not precisely the point to which the thought of our day has come: rational ethics have disappeared, dogmatic theology has disappeared, metaphysics have all but vanished and in their place men come to think about themselves only in the context of today and tomorrow, the immediacy of the moment, the free address and the free act, the liberated body and the unanalyzed mind.

Shestov is a great contemporary and will probably always be contemporary as long as our civilization continues its disintegration. He is neither hopeful nor despairing—on such issues as cause men to hope and despair, he is strangely silent. Indubitably he is a mystic, but only in the sense that he never tells us from where comes his assurance of his own ultimate ground. But that doesn't matter. We don't have to ask such questions just yet. What counts throughout the dithyrambic repetition of his *Athens and Jerusalem* liturgy is that he seems appallingly right—all the philosophers (Socrates, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel) seem in his version of their doctrine to be unbelievably self-deceiving and the Bible (for Shestov the Old and the New Testaments) seems innocently, marvelously, accurately on target about the human condition.

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(Continued from page 637)

have originally identified himself with the Son of Man). The going up through Jerusalem to await the in-breaking of the Kingdom, the triumphal entrance into Jerusalem with its conscious use of Messianic symbols, the fact that he was executed by the Romans as a Messianic seditionist, these are reliable building blocks for a view of Jesus' point of view, rather than some vague reconstruction of his "baptismal experience."

The objective evidence points unmistakably to a conclusion (which could be accepted by a historian, as such) that Jesus' last preaching and death took place in a community that was whipped into a fever pitch of eschatological expectation, and it was in this context that the belief in the resurrection arose. Why was there no hint of any of this in Father Dunne's reconstruction of Jesus' "biography"?

ROSEMARY RUETHER

Reply

Notre Dame, Ind.

To the Editors: The questions which Rosemary Ruether has posed for me are basically two: (1) Why impose a modern existentialist mentality upon Jesus? and (2) Why not admit that the mentality of Jesus was that of a first century sectarian apocalyptic Jew? I could reverse the two questions and ask (1) Why impose the mentality of modern sectarian apocalyptic movements (e.g. that of the Adventists) upon men living in New Testament times? and (2) Why not admit that there is a resonance between the contents of the Gospel and the existential elements in the modern mentality? What I am sug-

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gesting is that it is not really possible for us to molt, to shed and cast off our modern mentality when we come to examine the mentalities of other ages. What we can do is enter into a sympathetic understanding of former mentalities by finding the resonances of those mentalities with our own.

This is the purport of what I was saying in my article about the problem of "passing over" from our own standpoint to those of Jesus and his disciples and about the parallel problem of passing over from our standpoint to those of Socrates and his disciples. The difference which I see between the standpoint of Jesus himself and that of the evangelists is not, as Mrs. Ruether assumes, the difference between the mentality of an existentialist and that of apocalyptic sectaries. It is rather the difference between a standpoint from which a life is still unfinished and one from which it is complete.

The standpoint which we ordinarily take on the life of Jesus is more like that of the evangelists than that of Jesus, for it is a standpoint from which Jesus is a man whose life is already lived. The standpoint which Jesus himself took on his own life, being a standpoint from which his life was still unfinished, is more like the standpoints which we take on our own lives. Hence the "existential" tone of the results one obtains in an endeavor to pass over to his standpoint. Modern existentialist thinking arises from an interest in the standpoints which we take on our own lives. It is a methodic study of those standpoints. Thus I think there should be an existential tone about any analysis of the standpoint which Jesus took on his own life, even if Jesus were construed to be an apocalyptic sectary awaiting the immediate end of the world. An existential analysis of the life of an apocalyptic sectary is as possible as an existential analysis of any other life. Yet, as a matter of fact, Jesus does not appear to be an apocalyptic sectary if one submits his life to such an analysis.

The hope of Israel in the time of Jesus took two forms: the hope for the restoration of the kingdom and the hope for the end of the world. The first was embodied in the imagery of the "kingdom of God" and the second in the imagery of the "Son of Man." Jesus apparently used both images in his preaching. From the standpoint of his completed life it emerges that he disappointed both hopes: he failed to restore the kingdom of Israel and he failed to bring the world to an end. I do not see, however, that it would be any more "objective" or "historical" to say that he hoped to bring the world to an end than it would be to say that he hoped to restore the kingdom of Israel. He used the imagery of both hopes, inconsistent as these hopes were with one another, but what he meant by this does not appear until we make the effort to pass over to his standpoint. If we do this, taking into account the relation between his life and that of John the Baptist, I think that the meaning of the "kingdom of God" and the "Son of Man" in his message begins to become clear and that his life begins to appear as a life of receiving and communicating unconditional love.

(REV.) JOHN S. DUNNE, C.S.C.

The Cardinal & War

Dover Air Force Base, Del.

To the Editors: Just finished reading your "Cardinal, Pope and War" editorial of January 13. It is inconceivable to suppose that balanced men endorse warfare —even further to suggest that a man of Cardinal Spellman's position applauds it —though your editorial would so imply.

I am sure that responsible people of this government are not willing to see slavery reimposed on defenseless Vietnam citizens. While it is repugnant to be a "world Policeman"—is it not conversely Christian to free those in bondage? Must we always be made to appear as the transgressor rather than the transgressed ?

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HENRY J. MEADE
Chaplain, Major, USAF

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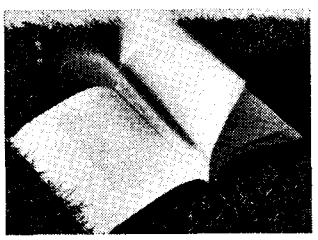

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